



MUSIC, RELIGION AND POLITICS AT WORCESTER CATHEDRAL, 680-1950

RICHARD NEWSHOLME

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Information about any revised edition of this work will be provided at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OPB.0437>

ISBN Paperback 978-1-80511-453-6

ISBN Hardback 978-1-80511-454-3

ISBN PDF 978-1-80511-455-0

ISBN HTML 978-1-80511-457-4

ISBN EPUB 978-1-80511-456-7

DOI: 10.11647/OPB.0437

Cover image: The Chantry Chapel of Prince Arthur in Worcester Cathedral, January 16, 2024. Photo by Richard Newsholme. Cover design: Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal

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Acknowledgements

Thanks are primarily due to Dr David Morrison and the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, who have very kindly allowed access to the cathedral library, the main resource for writing this history. Several other archivists and librarians have also been most helpful. Rebecca Phillips, Cathedral Archivist at Gloucester, provided access to organ and choir partbooks as well as chapter records; Rosemary Firman, Hereford Cathedral Librarian, allowed study of Duncombe's carols and medieval compotus rolls from Worcester; and Martin Holmes, Music Librarian at the Bodleian Library, identified Worcester manuscripts, including those by William Davis. Jennifer Thorp, Archivist at New College, Oxford, helped with the Bursar's Long Books, and Ruth Bagley, formerly Head of Records and Research at the Shropshire Record Office, transcribed passages from the churchwarden's accounts of St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury.

I am most grateful for the help of Roger Bowers, Emeritus Reader in Music at the University of Cambridge, who kindly read through a draft of Chapter Two, making helpful suggestions and correcting some blunders. Needless to say, any that remain are the responsibility of the author. Chapter Seven and parts of Chapter Six rely heavily on work by my son, David Newsholme, who studied this period in detail while working for his doctorate at the University of York. His thesis gives more background and, in particular, discusses the contribution of William Davis to both sacred and secular music in Worcester.¹ Richard Turbet, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Aberdeen, provided a copy of an article in the *Annual Byrd Newsletter*, which he founded and edited, and discussed matters relating to Byrd and Tomkins, including the latter's organ Offertory; and Tim Treml shared his research findings

¹ Newsholme (2013).

on John and William Barlow. Stella Thebridge of Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield, allowed access to view and photograph the old quire furnishings that were moved there from Worcester, Pat Hughes provided several references for relevant Worcester archives, and Robert Beattie discussed the Communion plate and showed me some that has survived. To all of these, I am most grateful.

The title of this book has been adapted from a suggestion made by Rachel Cowgill in her thoughtful 2005 review of Barra Boydell's *A History of Music at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin*. Professor Boydell gives an interesting account of the music of one of the two Protestant Dublin cathedrals, which contrasts with the experience in England partly because of the ambiguous position of an Irish Anglican cathedral.

Special thanks are due to Alessandra Tosi and her team at Open Book Publishers and also to the three referees who read a draft and made helpful comments. I am most grateful to all.

Finally, I acknowledge the use of the British Newspaper Archive (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) to supplement the newspaper collection available on microfilm at The Hive, Worcester.

I only came across an Oxford D.Phil. thesis by Anna Burson, titled *Continuity and Change at Hereford and Worcester Cathedrals, and the Effects on Musical and Liturgical Provision and Practice, c.1480–1650*, after this study was written. It therefore does not appear in the bibliography, but I mention it here for those interested in comparing and contrasting the developments in secular and monastic cathedrals during this period.

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Preface

This book explores the history of music and liturgy at Worcester Cathedral from its foundation in the seventh century until about 1950. It also looks at the political background, especially when this has brought about radical change. By the time of Henry VIII's break from the Roman Catholic Church and the tumultuous birth of the Church of England, the cathedral had already stood for over eight and a half centuries. Founded to serve in the traditional Roman Church, it became a Benedictine monastic cathedral in the tenth century and continued as this for over five hundred years until the Dissolution. The cathedral then became an Anglican one with what we can now see as two brief interruptions. The first was a five-year return to Roman Catholicism under Queen Mary, the second, a fourteen-year transformation during Oliver Cromwell's rule in the following century, when the building served as a meeting-house for Non-Conformists.

The importance and significance of both the liturgy and the music have fluctuated greatly between these periods. For the monks of the priory, they provided the framework of their routine; the liturgy was governed by a set of arcane rules, and the ritual and its associated chant probably occupied their thoughts for much of the day. In contrast, for the Non-Conformists of the Interregnum, music and liturgy were considered unnecessary and burdensome. The ceremonial had no scriptural authority, had been drained of significance by mindless repetition, and was better discarded. In more recent centuries, the liturgical form has varied with the beliefs of the senior churchmen, for some of whom it held no significance, while for others it added dignity to the worship and a sense of pride to those who performed it. Considered unimportant in the earlier nineteenth century, it was accompanied by declining standards of choral singing leading to a serious lapse and became what S S Wesley called a 'source of grief and shame'.¹

¹ Wesley (1849), p. 2.

The book is intended for general, non-specialist readers, but references to sources and to works by various scholars have been included for those who wish to look deeper into subjects of interest. I have included musical examples for those who read music, but I hope they will not deter those who do not, as they are not essential for the narrative. The account finishes in 1950, which may seem odd, especially as really significant advances were still to come. In particular, the music reached a new level of excellence that it had probably never achieved before. I believe, though, that a longer perspective is needed to give an adequate, balanced account of more recent years. An author must respect the feelings of individuals and families still alive, and hurt may be caused by missing an essential event or by including one considered private. Avoiding sensitive issues can also lead to a partial or misleading account, so the task is better left to others of a later generation. Rather than merely passing over these years, however, I have included a postscript to highlight some of the more important milestones.

Worcester Cathedral is an ideal subject for an investigation of this sort. Apart from its long history, there is a rich survival of evidence, including medieval liturgical manuscripts, rare fragments of early polyphony, choir and organ partbooks, and various archives and muniments. It also has a story often shared by other English cathedrals, not all of them so well documented, and because of this, has a wider relevance and, I hope, a wider interest.

October 2024

1. The Music and Liturgy of the Medieval Mass and Office (680–1540)

The last fifty years have seen growing interest in relating medieval liturgy to the churches it took place in. This can help our understanding of the way the music and liturgy were performed and can also throw light on the influence this had on the design and use of the architecture. The first chapter aims to make this connection for the various buildings that served the Benedictine Cathedral Priory at Worcester. It also describes some of the more important monastic ceremonies that appear in the so-called *Worcester Antiphoner* (c.1230), a famous and rare survivor of the destruction of liturgical manuscripts at the time of Edward VI. Before the monastery was founded, however, a cathedral built in the seventh century stood alone for three hundred years. Much is unknown about it, but the chapter starts by exploring what we can discover about the liturgy that took place there.

This first cathedral was built at Worcester shortly after the founding of the episcopal see in about 680 and dedicated to St Peter.¹ The diocese was the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of the Hwicce. It was larger than the modern diocese, including most of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, part of Warwickshire and small portions of several other counties. St Augustine had arrived in Kent about eighty years earlier on his mission to convert the pagans to Christianity, but Celtic Christianity had been established amongst the Hwicce before that. Steven Bassett has even suggested that the religion was rooted amongst the Early Britons in the Severn valley before the Anglo-Saxons arrived.²

1 Sims-Williams (1988), p. 168; Charter S77, <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/77.html>

2 Bassett (1989), p. 231.

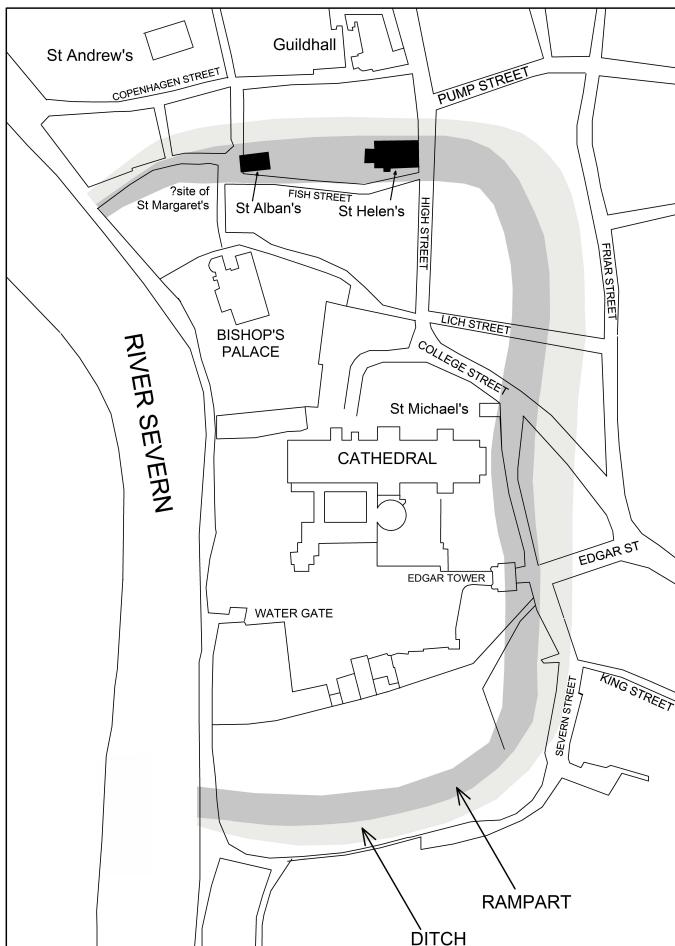


Fig. 1 The Iron Age rampart and ditch and Worcester's early churches
(based on Napthan (2014), Fig. 1, p. 3, with permission)

The new cathedral was built on a low promontory on a bend of the River Severn. Archaeologists have been able to show that it was bounded on the west by the river and on the north, south and east by an Iron Age rampart and ditch (see Fig. 1). It is now understood to have occupied a central position within this earlier defensive area, and this implies it may already have been a place of ritual or religious significance.³ Charters

³ Napthan (2014).

surviving from this early period show that until the English monastic reform of the late tenth century, St Peter's was the only cathedral at Worcester, and the community was a secular (non-monastic) one.⁴

Other than the cathedral, the three earliest Worcester churches were St Helen's, St Alban's, and St Margaret's. St Margaret's disappeared at some time during the Middle Ages but the other two still exist. St Helen's was the oldest, and it has even been suggested that it predated the Anglo-Saxons.⁵ St Alban's and St Margaret's had been built by 721, when the chronicle of Evesham Abbey claims they became possessions of the abbey, and St Margaret's may well have stood close to St Alban's.⁶ These three may have formed a so-called Anglo-Saxon church group: churches which were clustered together, often on an east-west axis, and which cooperated together in various ways. Helen Gittos has discussed how medieval liturgy could often be peripatetic, involving processions between churches with a very public display of the ritual, but she has warned that we should not assume that churches were part of such a group just because they were close to one another.⁷ At Worcester the three churches were certainly grouped together, and they were close enough to the cathedral for it to be included in ceremonies too. Possibly they were even aligned east-west following the Iron Age rampart, although the original site of the long-vanished St Margaret's is uncertain. Further evidence is needed, and for now such a collaborative relationship has to remain an interesting possibility.

St Peter's Cathedral and the Secular Liturgy

Evidence for the liturgy performed in the secular cathedral is rather scanty. A commentary on the Mass, written in an elegant Irish hand, survives from the late eighth or early ninth century and is likely to have been copied at Worcester. It was formerly in the cathedral library and was catalogued there in 1622–3 but is now in the Bodleian Library.⁸ Known as the *primum in ordine* from the opening words, it is an early copy of

⁴ Atkins (1937–40).

⁵ Bassett (1989), pp. 238ff.

⁶ Regarding the site of St Margaret's see Baker and Holt (2004), pp. 201–2 and p. 167, Fig. 6.11.

⁷ Gittos (2013), p. 60.

⁸ GB-Ob Hatton MS 93; Atkins and Ker (1944), p. 49, no. 223.

one of several commentaries written on the continent around this time. They are thought to have been encouraged by the Carolingian reformers to promote Charlemagne's campaign to standardise the liturgy, and are likely to have been intended as teaching texts for clergy. If the *primum in ordine* was used in this way at Worcester, it may show the way Mass was performed at St Peter's and hence imply a Carolingian influence there.⁹ The commentary describes a sung Mass, and there is particular mention of antiphonal performance of the Introit and the Gradual by two choirs. The *Agnus Dei* was sung to a plainsong melody (*cantatur modulando*) during the taking of the bread and wine. The account also reminds readers that following a ruling by Pope Telesphorus, the first Mass of Christmas was to be celebrated during the night.

The so-called Egbert Pontifical, now in Paris, is thought to have been copied for Oswald, who was Bishop of Worcester from about 961.¹⁰ It gives details of the liturgy for ceremonies in which the bishop took part, such as the lengthy and complicated rite of church dedication. Also from this period, a prayer book of the eighth century has marginal notes which are thought to have been written at the Worcester Priory.¹¹ These notes have been dated to either the middle of the tenth century or to the early years after Bishop Oswald's arrival. They include prayers for the Mass and for a complete set of Office Hours, the round of daily prayer composed of Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. There are also prayers for special ceremonies such as for exorcising a communal space or anointing the sick. Their existence suggests that all of these observances and rites, including Masses and a full set of Office Hours, would have been used at Worcester at this time.¹²

In addition to these, there were votive Masses on behalf of benefactors. Votive Masses were those performed in addition to the prescribed liturgy of the day. Some of them are mentioned in early charters. In 757 three rulers of the Hwicce granted land to the church in return for solemn celebrations of Mass to be offered up for them 'by day and by night'.¹³ Later, by a charter of 875, the Office Hours were supplemented

9 Jones (1998), pp. 669–70.

10 F-Pn MS Lat. 10575.

11 Sims-Williams (1990), pp. 279ff.

12 GB-Lbl MS Royal 2.A.xx; Crowley (2006).

13 Charter S55, <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/55.html>

by a memorial at the request of the King of the Mercians, Ceolwulf II. A memorial consisted of rather more than this simple word implies: it was an antiphon, a versicle and response, and a collect, usually added at the end of an Office Hour. In return for this duty, Ceolwulf granted the diocese exemption from the burden of feeding the king's horses and grooms.¹⁴ The ruler succeeding Ceolwulf, Aethelred, with his wife, asked for a Psalm to be sung daily at Matins (*uhtsong*), Terce (*undernsong*), and Vespers (*evensong*). In return, they authorised the construction of fortifications at Worcester and offered half the income they received from the city because of their sovereignty.¹⁵

These supplements to daily worship, no doubt along with many others not recorded, increased the church's wealth but made the ritual considerably more complicated.

The Birth of the Priory

In 969, according to a later synod, Bishop Oswald founded the priory.¹⁶ It was a time of change in the Western Church, following the lead of Cluny Abbey in eastern France, and King Edgar had set up a council at Winchester aiming to encourage and unify Benedictine worship in the Cluniac tradition. He shared the reformer's goal of restoring Benedictine monasteries to being great centres of piety and learning. If he could achieve this and encourage the creation of new monasteries, it might also enhance his own prestige.

The three senior reformers to lead the council were Bishop Aethelwold of Winchester, Archbishop Dunstan of Canterbury, and Bishop Oswald of Worcester. They borrowed 'even as honey is gathered by bees' from the customs of the Abbey of St Benoît-sur-Loire at Fleury and the Abbey of St Peter, Ghent, and all the assembled bishops, abbots, and abbesses vowed to carry out the council's rulings.¹⁷ The code of monastic observance that resulted is known as the *Regularis Concordia* [The Monastic Agreement], and the details of liturgy given there were those that came to be used by Oswald at Worcester. Although the synod

¹⁴ Charter S215, <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/215.html>

¹⁵ Charter S223, <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/223.html>

¹⁶ Wharton (1691), vol. 1, p. 542.

¹⁷ Symons (1953), pp. 3, 4.

had given a date of 969 for the foundation of the priory, Julia Barrow has suggested that the move to a fully monastic community was not complete until some time between the early eleventh century and the episcopate of Wulfstan II (1062–95).¹⁸ Oswald built a new cathedral for the monks, which was completed by 983, and St Peter's was then probably occupied by the secular clergy.¹⁹

From the earliest days of the priory, two daily Masses would have been attended by the whole community: Main Mass at the high altar and Morrow Mass at the matutinal altar. The latter would have stood in the quire at the foot of the steps leading to the sanctuary.²⁰ Some Benedictine houses also celebrated a daily Lady Mass from the first half of the twelfth century. At the Cathedral Priory of Rochester, for example, it was started in the 1130s, and at the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, it began during the rule of Abbot Anselm (1121–46).²¹ At Worcester, however, a daily celebration of Lady Mass is not mentioned until the late thirteenth century, when a certain Christina gifted six shillings annually ‘for maintenance of the lamp of the Blessed Mary where her daily Mass is celebrated’. By this, she hoped to benefit her soul and those of her ancestors.²² The lamp was in the Lady Chapel, and both the chapel and the lamp were first mentioned in a document of 1259 or 1260.²³ The chapel lay in the new eastern extension of the cathedral, the foundation stone for which had been laid by Bishop William de Blois in 1224 and which Ute Engel considers was probably finished by the mid-1250s.²⁴ Daily Lady Mass may have started from the time the altar was consecrated, but the exact date of this is unknown.

Unlike the Main Mass and Morrow Mass, Lady Mass was not attended by the whole convent but was run on a weekly rota, as is made clear by one of the injunctions after Archbishop Winchelsey’s visitation in 1301:

18 Barrow (1996), p. 98.

19 Barrow (1996), pp. 89ff; Charter S1345, <https://esawyer.lib.cam.ac.uk/charter/1345.html>

20 Symons (1953), pp. 16–17; Rock (1905), vol. 1, p. 177.

21 Roper (1993), pp. 46–7.

22 B1128 Late thirteenth century gift to the priory. The Mass is also mentioned in the will of John de Wyg’ in 1291 (Willis Bund (1898–1902), vol. 2, p. 422).

23 B291 Covenant between Walter de la Were, his wife, and the priory.

24 Engel (2007), p. 135.

Those persons deputed each week to celebrate Mass of the Blessed Virgin, whose names are made known, are to remain continuously until the completion of Mass, according to the wish of the precentor. An absentee without lawful cause on that day has to be content with bread and pottage.²⁵

Some idea of the usual attendance at Lady Mass is given by records of other large Benedictine houses. The customary of Westminster Abbey of c.1266 records that the *custos* of the chapel was to be present, or another brother in his place, along with his clerk and six monks, whose names would be listed on the *tabula* or duty roster.²⁶ At the Cathedral Priory of Canterbury, it was the precentor, along with seven monks, who attended daily.²⁷ White vestments were often associated with Marian devotion, and by his will of 1301, Bishop Giffard bequeathed his own to the chapel, which were white and made of diaper (silk). He also left it his alb, amice, stole, and maniple of the same suit.²⁸ A later chapel inventory at Worcester, however, lists red, green and blue ones as well, often with silver or gold embroidery.²⁹

The Little Office of the Virgin

There was an extraordinary expansion of the cult of Mary across Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It found expression at Worcester in the new Lady Chapel, the daily Lady Mass, and in a round of murals circling the chapter house, which seem to have culminated with Mary's Assumption and crowning as Queen of Heaven. The cult also inspired the 'Little Office of the Virgin'. This was a complete set of Office Hours honouring the Virgin, and it appears in the *Worcester Antiphoner*. Each hour was sung in the quire after its counterpart in the regular Office. The Blessed Virgin was seen not only as Queen of Heaven but also as Bride of Christ and Intercessor for the salvation of mankind, and personal adoration of her spread enormously. Private devotions using Books of Hours, which included the Little Office of the Virgin, were much favoured and copied in large numbers.

25 Translation from Haines (1996), p. 274.

26 Thompson (1902–4), vol. 2, p. 91.

27 Bowers (1995), p. 414.

28 Willis Bund (1907), p. 48.

29 B1870 Inventory, 3 March 1391/2.

The Worcester manuscript includes nine Magnificat antiphons for Vespers of the Virgin, to be sung between Pentecost and the Nativity of the Virgin. They do not appear elsewhere, and Sally Roper believes they were newly composed for this Office.³⁰ One is illustrated in Fig. 2.



Fig. 2 The sixth Magnificat antiphon, *Sexaginta sunt regine et octoginta concubine* [There are sixty queens and eighty concubines], Song of Songs, 6:7 (F160, fol. 81v, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

Performing the Liturgy in the Anglo-Saxon, Romanesque, and Gothic Cathedrals

The monastic day followed an accepted order with slight variations between summer and winter. The exact timing of services, however, was governed by sunrise and sunset. Shortly after midnight, the day would start with Matins followed by Lauds, after which the monks would return to bed. In the winter, Lauds would be delayed until just before daybreak. Following daybreak would come Prime, then study in the cloisters before Terce and Morrow Mass. The community would meet in the chapter house, there would be a further period of study in the cloister, then Sext and a procession leading on to High Mass. The Office of None was held around midday, after which there would be a meal, then Vespers in the afternoon and Compline to end the day.

The content of services depended on whether the day was a feast or ferial one. At the time of the *Worcester Antiphoner*, the feasts were divided into six ranks according to importance. In the highest rank, known as

³⁰ Roper (1993), pp.129, 176.

the *Septem festum*, were thirteen festivals, of which four were called the principal feasts: Christmas, Easter, and the Assumption and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. Next there were five of *Solemnis processio* rank, twenty-four *in capis*, and eighteen *in albis*. Finally came the ranks ‘Twelve lessons’ and ‘Three lessons’. The more important feast days started with Vespers on the previous day, known as the first Vespers of the festival. All of these services were private and laity were not admitted. In fact, laymen were usually confined to the nave west of the rood screen and only pilgrims visiting the shrines of St Oswald and St Wulfstan were allowed access to the east end of the cathedral.

The cathedral church dedicated to St Peter stood at Worcester for four centuries. Its presbytery was enlarged during the reign of Edward the Confessor, and it probably stood until the end of the eleventh century.³¹ St Mary’s Cathedral, built during the time of Bishop Oswald, was completed by 983. It was larger than St Peter’s and so able to hold the many who came to hear Oswald preach, but the only description we have of it comes from a passing reference in William of Malmesbury’s *Vita Wulfstani* [Life of Wulfstan]. This passage mentions, while describing Wulfstan’s devotions, that it had eighteen altars and a western chapel dedicated to All Saints.³²

Bishop Oswald, following the instructions of the *Regularis Concordia* for the newly-founded monastery, would have had to meet its requirements for the building. In the 1970s an American scholar, Arnold Klukas, listed three of these.³³ The first was a need for *secreta oratorii loca* [secret places of the oratory]: altars or chapels that were secluded enough to be used for private prayer and Masses. The exact meaning of the word ‘oratory’ is still unclear. Secondly, the text describes a procession each night after Lauds to a chapel to celebrate Lauds for All Saints and Lauds for the Dead.³⁴ The site of this chapel is not mentioned, but Klukas found that a customary for Essen Abbey, North Germany, which has marked similarities to the *Concordia*, showed that there it was held in a raised chapel at the west end of the church. It is possible that similarly, a raised,

31 Hearne (1723), vol. 2, p. 342.

32 Darlington (1928), p. 9.

33 Klukas (1978), pp. 216ff.

34 Symons (1953), p. 15. Symons makes a slip in his translation of *Matutinales Laudes De Omnibus Sanctis*, which should read ‘early morning Lauds for All Saints’ not ‘Matins for All Saints’.

western chapel was used in England. Finally, the *Concordia* describes the *tenebrae* liturgy of the three nights leading up to Easter. This was the Office during which the candles were extinguished one by one until the church was left in darkness. Then, through the dark, came four short chants from different parts of the building. An Old English version of the *Concordia* describes it as follows:

With all the lights extinguished, two well-rehearsed children go to the south chapel as shown them beforehand, and with loud, melodious voices sing, *Kyrieleison*; similarly, another two in the north chapel sing in response, *Christeleison*, and at the west wall, two of maturer years sing *Domine miserere nobis*. When this is finished, the whole choir answers, *Christus dominus factus est obediens usque ad mortem*.³⁵

The monks would have sat facing each other across the aisle, and together they would have formed the choir. The text implies that the chapels on the north and south lay behind them. The third chant would then be sung from the west, and the fourth would be taken up by all the monks together.

Many of the eighteen altars in Oswald's cathedral may have provided 'secret places of the oratory', although we are not told where they were. The western chapel was perhaps the one described in 1041 as 'an upper room of a certain tower in the monastery of Worcester',³⁶ and it may have been used for the Offices after Lauds each night. But little more can be said from this rather slim evidence. It is just possible, however, that the cathedral shared some features with another church in the diocese, which has survived remarkably well. Deerhurst Priory, near Tewkesbury, may have been one of the seven monasteries that Bishop Oswald was said to have reformed, and its church remains largely Anglo-Saxon. It has a lofty tower at the west with a chapel on the second floor; corbels on the west wall indicate there was originally a gallery

35 GB-Ccc MS 201: 'eallum leohtum gan twa cild welgestemnede and to þam foresceawode to þan suðportice mid gedremum swege singan hludre stefne Kyrielejson, and gelice þa oðre twa on þam norðportice singen þus andswariende, Christelejson, and on þaem westheowage syn twegen on maran ylde, þe þis singen, Domine, miserere nobis. þisum geendedum andswarige eal chor Christus dominus factus est obediens usque ad mortem'. (All translations are by the author unless otherwise specified.)

36 Darlington and McGurk (1995), p. 532: 'in cuiusdam turris Wigorniensis monasterii solario'.

there; and a square quire is flanked by *porticus* [chapels] on two levels, the upper ones overlooking the quire below through arched openings (see Fig. 3 and Fig. 4).

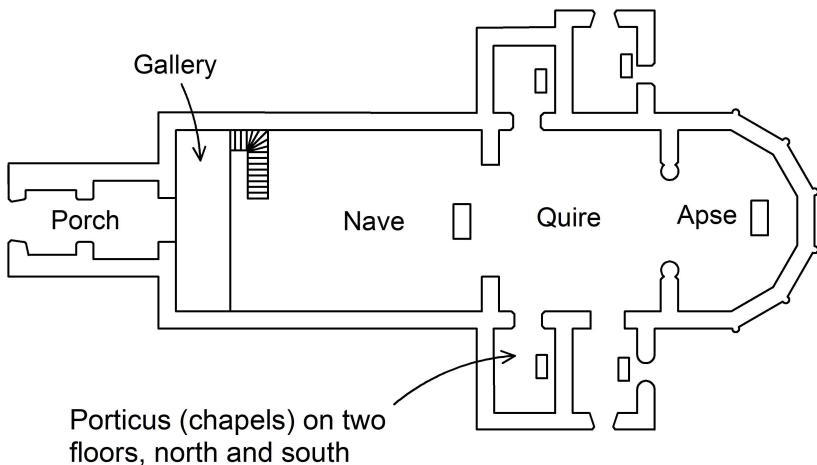


Fig. 3 Plan of Deerhurst Church c.1000 (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)



Fig. 4 The former quire of Deerhurst Church. The blocked archway led to the apse and the arched openings on north and south communicated with upper chapels (photograph by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Deerhurst Church would have accommodated the *Concordia* liturgy remarkably well: the chapel in the west tower could have been used for the

night Offices after Lauds; the upper chapels overlooking the quire were ideally suited for the first two chants at the end of *tenebrae*, with the third chant coming from the western gallery; and the small chapels north and south of the quire could also serve as ‘secret places of the oratory’. Oswald’s cathedral would have been larger than Deerhurst Church, but some of the eighteen altars were quite likely to have been in chapels flanking the quire, as at Deerhurst. Upper chapels would have served for the *tenebrae* antiphony, and the western chapel for the Offices after Lauds. We can also compare the Old Minster at Winchester, Bishop Aethelwold’s own cathedral and the most important centre of the tenth-century monastic revival. Here there were chapels north and south of the quire and also a row of several more on either side of the nave. In addition, there was a large westwork with further chapels flanking a central narthex. All of these could have provided ‘secret places of the oratory’ to serve this larger community, and they give clues to how these were provided at Worcester.³⁷

For a century Oswald’s cathedral served the monastery, but by the 1080s the community was growing. Bishop Wulfstan claimed to have expanded it from twelve to fifty, and in 1084 he started to build a new, larger cathedral that was also to be dedicated to St Mary.³⁸ There is evidence that many Anglo-Saxon traditions were continued by Wulfstan, and it seems quite likely that the same applied to the liturgy. The new cathedral was a Norman one, and archaeologists have discovered much about its construction—summaries of the evidence for this have been published by Philip Barker and Ute Engel.³⁹ It is not difficult to see how the *Concordia* requirements could have been fulfilled in this new building.

Bishop Samson was buried in 1112 *in navi ecclesiae, ante crucifixum* [in the nave of the church, before the cross], which must refer to a rood cross, and there are signs that galleries stretched the length of the cathedral, including the transepts⁴⁰ (Fig. 5). Singers in these galleries would have been able to take part in the *tenebrae* rituals, chanting above the heads of those in the quire below. Private prayers and Masses could take place in the chapels around the presbytery and in similar ones in the crypt and in tribune (gallery) chapels above. The construction of the west end of the cathedral is uncertain, but

³⁷ Biddle (2018).

³⁸ Luard (1869), p. 373; Hearne (1723), vol. 2, p. 418.

³⁹ Barker (1994); Engel (2007).

⁴⁰ Hamilton (1870), p. 290; Engel (2007), pp. 63 (quire gallery), 65 (transept gallery), 66 (nave gallery).

Engel has argued that it was most likely to have employed twin towers, as at Christ Church and St Augustine's, Canterbury.⁴¹ In this case it is likely that there would have been a raised chapel above the west door between the towers, and this could continue to be used for the Offices following Lauds.

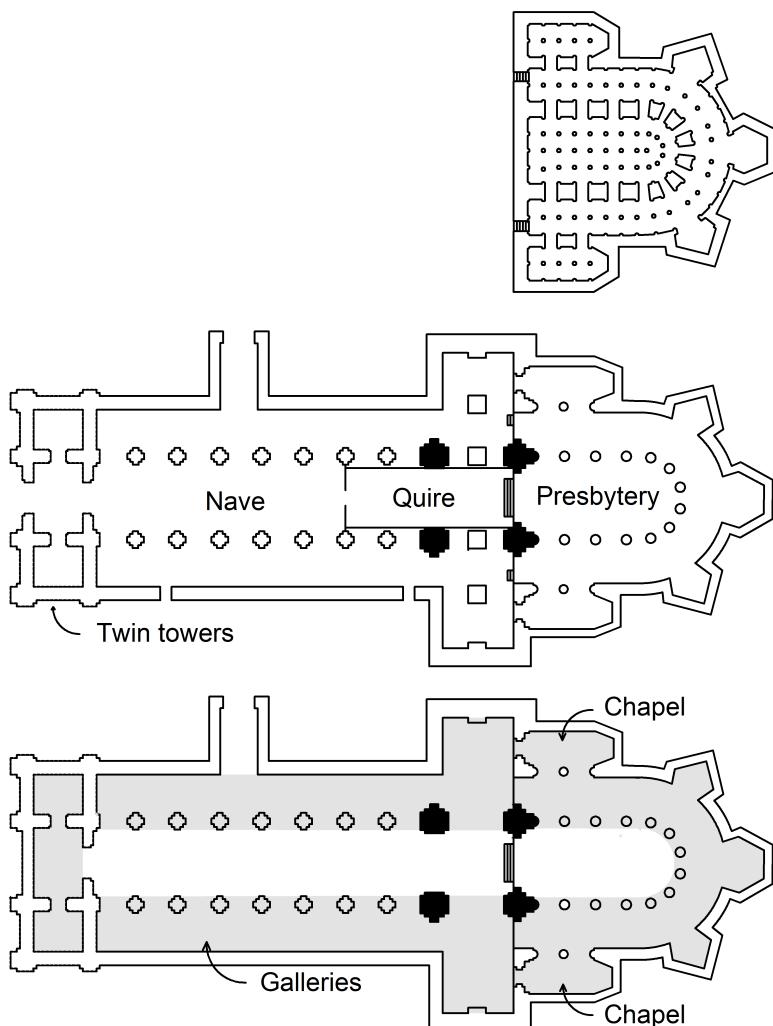


Fig. 5 The Romanesque cathedral of Worcester, c.1100, showing the crypt, ground floor, and platform galleries (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

41 Engel (2007), p. 77.

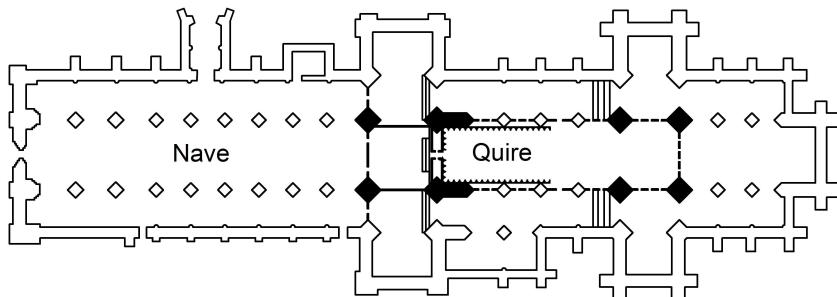


Fig. 6 The Gothic cathedral of Worcester (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

The final rebuilding of the cathedral, this time in a Gothic style, started with the two western bays of the nave, which may have needed reconstructing after the fall of a western tower in 1175.⁴² In this reconstruction, the western chapel would have been lost, and the Offices after Lauds each night would have had to move. Some years later, the west transept was also rebuilt, with removal of the platform galleries that had bordered the crossing.⁴³ Then a further radical change in the liturgical layout was brought about by the eastern extension of the cathedral in the years between 1224 and about 1255. After this, as Engel has now shown, the monks' quire (*chorus major*) was moved to a position east of the crossing, with the *pulpitum* between the eastern crossing piers and a rood beam between the western ones. The crossing itself served as *chorus minor*, an area for elderly or infirm monks to sit to hear the liturgy (Fig. 6).

By degrees, galleries were removed from the length of the building, with altars moving to the ground floor. If a saint had an altar in the cathedral, by the thirteenth century there would be processions to it after first Vespers and after Lauds—a safer undertaking if climbs up narrow spiral staircases could be avoided.

Use of Bells

The *Regularis Concordia* mentioned the frequent use of bells in Anglo-Saxon churches and made a point of continuing this. William of

42 Engel (2007), pp. 82–4.

43 Engel (2007), p. 90.

Malmesbury's *Vita Wulfstani* says of him, 'Above the roof of the church he devised a structure in which the bells hung', suggesting that he also encouraged the tradition.⁴⁴

It was usual to ring a bell both inside and outside the church during Mass at the singing of the *Sanctus* and again at the elevation of the consecrated elements. The bells would announce these holy moments to those who were unable to see them, so that they could offer an act of adoration to God. Bishop William de Blois referred to another reason for ringing during Mass when, during the religious Crusades, he ruled in his synodal statutes of 1229 for the diocese of Worcester:

When the bell is rung for the Holy Land during the celebration of Mass, everyone hearing this outside the church and understanding it should kneel and say the Lord's prayer, namely *Pater Noster*, for the succour of the Holy Land.

Bishop Walter de Cantilupe called the bell within the church a little one (*campanella*), but it is possible that the large bell in the quire mentioned in a sacrist's account of 1501–2 also referred to a *Sanctus* bell.⁴⁵

Two chants were marked out by the ringing of bells actually during the singing on some high festivals. They were the *Gloria* at Mass and the *Te Deum* in Matins, both ancient Latin hymns praising God for his divinity and rejoicing in the salvation brought by Christ. Both were sung on days of a festive nature, and often when one was omitted, so was the other. Although there is no rubric (i.e., written instruction) about ringing during the *Gloria* in the *Worcester Antiphoner*, it was usual practice for the bells to start at the words *et in terra pax* [and on earth, peace]. For Easter Day Matins, the rubric regarding the *Te Deum* reads: 'Let [the bell] be rung for the *Te Deum*, [and] at *per singulos dies benedicimus te* [every day we bless thee], let a *classicum* be rung.'⁴⁶ *Classicum* literally translates as a 'war trumpet call' and because of this is generally taken to mean that all the bells were clashed together. It was used at times of great joy or solemnity.

The traditional ringing before services was sometimes accompanied by the use of a mysterious *apparatus*. For example, on St Mark's Day

⁴⁴ Darlington (1928), p. 15.

⁴⁵ Powicke and Cheney (1964), vol. 1, pp. 175, 299; C426.

⁴⁶ F160 *The Worcester Antiphoner*, fol. 64v.

(April 25th), a procession took place into the city, and after Sext, the *apparatus* was struck, followed by three chimes on one of the great bells as a sign for the convent to assemble in the quire.⁴⁷ Two passages in the *Antiphoner* give clues as to its nature. On Good Friday before Terce, the instruction reads, ‘at a convenient time let the board be struck at the door of the church at the *apparatus* three times’, and on Maundy Thursday before the meal, ‘the sub-prior, leaving, strikes the board near the cymbal’.⁴⁸ Taken together these suggest a board combined with a clapper and cymbal. This probably hung in the cloister near the door from the east walk into the church. It was usual for the bells and cymbals to be silent between the *Gloria* at Mass on Maundy Thursday and the *Gloria* at Mass on Holy Saturday, and the board could be used as a substitute during this sombre time.

Dominical tabulae

The precentor’s accounts include willow (or oak) boards for ‘dominical *tabulae*’ in the cloisters.⁴⁹ The *tabula* listed the duties for the coming week starting on Sunday and was displayed in the cloisters. Particular guidance for compiling this duty roster is given for the complex liturgies of the *tenebrae* services during the *Triduum* (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday) and for Easter Day and the week following. As an example, we can take the rubric for the first two Offices on Easter Day. The rubric gives the names of roles allocated to monks, which first need some explanation.

The precentor had the onerous responsibility of overseeing the performance of the liturgy, but he was assisted in this by the *cantaria*. The *cantaria* played a leading role in the chanting, and in the Sarum Use—the Salisbury Cathedral tradition—the role was known as ‘ruler of the choir’. The community would be split between the two sides of the quire, facing each other across the aisle, and the rows of stalls they occupied were known as forms and were numbered from the front,

47 F160, fol. 113r.

48 F160, fols 62r, 60v.

49 C371 Precentor’s Accounts, 1402: *Item in iij tabulis salicinis pro tabulis dominicalibus xij l[inks] et iij l[inks] in claustro xijd Item in ij aliis tabulis quercinis xijd* [1 link was later equivalent to 7.92 inches, but this was an early use of the term and less certain].

with the junior monks occupying the first form. The *ebdomadarii* were the celebrants for the Office. Each served for a week, and when there were two, they would probably have been stationed on opposite sides of the quire. They were assisted by the *diaconus ebdomadarius*, or deacon on duty for the week.

The rubric reads:

The way the tabula should be written for the following Offices:

[FOR MATINS:]

The Invitatory: two *ebdomadarii* and five of the seniors.

[Antiphons:]

The first antiphon: the *ebdomadarius*.

The two remaining: two seniors.

[Responsories:]

For the first responsory: three, namely the two *ebdomadarii* and the third of the second form of the *cantaria*'s choir.

For the second: four of the second form, from either choir.

For the third: as on [a feast of rank] *septem festum*.

[Lessons:]

For the first lesson: the *diaconus ebdomadarius*.

For the second: one of the seniors, or the prior may read it if he wishes.

For the third: the lord bishop.

And let the names of thurifers be written for each [lesson].

FOR LAUDS:

The *ebdomadarius* [intones] the antiphon.

Let the seniors, in order after the superiors, start the rest.

Otherwise as at the Office [on a feast of rank] *septem festum*.⁵⁰

Matins usually included three nocturns on Sundays and feast days. The first two consisted of six antiphons with psalms, and four so-called great responsories with lessons. The third had a single antiphon with three canticles, and four great responsories with lessons. On ferial days there were only two, simpler nocturns. Easter Day Matins was exceptional and, as this rubric implies, only had one nocturn with three antiphons and three responsories.

50 F160, fol. 63v.

Embellishments of the Chant at Worcester

For important feast days, the chants of the Mass were often embellished, and the most traditional form of embellishment was the melisma, in which multiple melody notes were sung to a single syllable. The melisma was favoured by St Augustine of Hippo (354–430), the most renowned of the Church fathers, who, using the term *jubilus*, wrote: ‘The *jubilus* is something which signifies that the heart labours with what it cannot utter [...] the heart rejoices without words, and the great expanse of joy has not the limit of syllables’.⁵¹ Especially between the ninth and eleventh centuries, there was a fashion for filling melismas with text, and also for adding supplementary wording and chant, particularly to the music of the Proper of the Mass (i.e., those chants varying with the feast: the Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertory, and Communion). The text additions were known as *prosulae* or *prosae*, and the term ‘trope’ was often used when both text and chant were added.⁵² David Hiley has written a lucid introduction to this music in his book, *Gregorian Chant*.

The Alleluia, which was sung after the Gradual in the Mass except during the penitential season, was already embellished with melismas. The Alleluia itself was followed by one (called the *jubilus*), and the verse that followed usually repeated this. A *prosula* consisted of words set to these melismas, written to make sense with the words of the Alleluia verse itself. The complete performance would follow the order:

Alleluia – verse – Alleluia

Several have survived in a Worcester manuscript, written with a neumatic notation on four-lined staves which have been scratched onto the paper with a point. Neumes were signs indicating either a single note or a small group of notes. Those used in this manuscript mostly represent single notes, and they take the form either of a notehead by itself (a *punctum*) or one with a tail (a *virga*). The difference between the two is uncertain. Earlier notations did not use a stave, so there was no precise indication of pitch, but here the presence of a stave means that the chants can be transcribed.⁵³

51 Translation from McKinnon (1987), pp. 156–7.

52 The meaning of ‘trope’ was rather variable. Hiley (2009), p. 136.

53 Add MS 25 Manuscript of Alleluia *prosulas*.

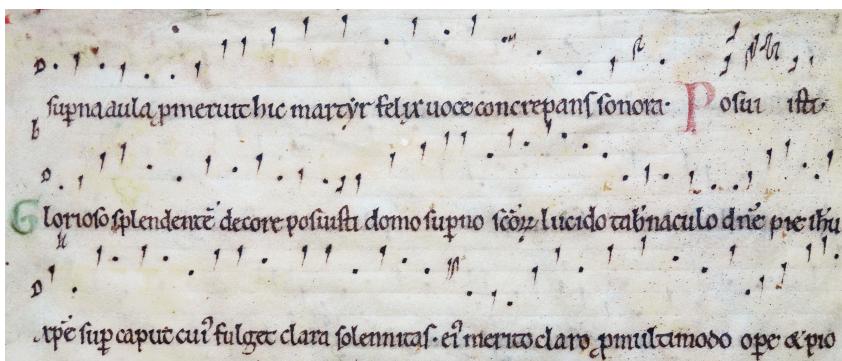


Fig. 7 The start of the verse for *Alleluia Posuisti Domine* (Add MS 25, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

F160

Add MS 25

PO - SU - IS - TI

Glo - ri - o - so splen - den - tem de - co - re PO - SU - IS - TI

DO

do - mo su - per - no san - cto - rum lu - ci - do ta - ber - na - u -

MI - NE SU - PER CA - PUT

IO DO - MI - NE pi - e Je - su Chri - ste SU - PER CA - PUT

Fig. 8 The start of the verse for *Alleluia Posuisti Domine* taken from F160, fol. 346v (verse alone) and Add MS 25, fol. 2v (verse with *prosula*) (transcribed by the author)⁵⁴

⁵⁴ A note with a stem indicates a *virga*, one without, a *punctum*. I have adopted the same approach as Karen Desmond, who has transcribed *Alleluia Letabitur iustus* and similarly compared it with the original without *prosula* in F160.

An example is *Alleluya Posuisti Domine*, used for a number of festivals of martyrs. It is thought to have been copied at the Worcester Priory, perhaps in the second decade of the twelfth century.⁵⁵ The text of the start of the verse without *prosula* reads: 'O Lord, thou hast set a crown of precious jewels upon her head', which, with the *prosula*, becomes: 'O holy Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast set a distinguished woman with honour and glory in the celestial home and the shining sanctuary of the saints, and a radiant crown shines upon her head' (the martyr could, of course, be male or female). Fig. 8 is a transcript of the start of this verse compared with the verse without *prosula* in the *Worcester Antiphoner*. Almost every note of the melisma has been given text in the *prosula*.

Some of these chant embellishments, by providing a commentary on the feast being celebrated, were able to make the Mass more relevant to the occasion, but their use declined in the twelfth century as various church reforms moved to standardise the liturgy.⁵⁶

Medieval Monastic Ceremonial at Worcester

A Pontifical (i.e., a book of rites led by the bishop) that was used at Worcester from the 1060s⁵⁷ and the later *Worcester Antiphoner* both have detailed rubrics that show how many of the more significant ceremonies took place in the priory. The following account gives an outline of some of them.

Tenebrae

The three days of the *triduum* (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) started with *tenebrae*, a stripped-down amalgam of Matins and Lauds, during which the lights were gradually extinguished until the church was left in darkness. The rubric in the *Worcester Antiphoner* reads:

Before Matins twenty-three candles are placed on a candlestand across the presbytery, with a tapestry hanging down below, and while [the bell] is rung for Matins, they are lit.⁵⁸

55 Desmond (2020), p. 684 and footnote 73.

56 Hiley (2009), p. 137.

57 GB-Ccc MS 146.

58 F160, fol. 58v.

After some prayers, a *classicum* was rung to express the distress and anguish of the occasion.

The lessons of the first nocturn each night were taken from the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Although sung to the usual tone, there was an introductory formula, *Incipit lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae* [Here begins the Lamentation of Jeremiah the Prophet], before the first lesson, and a closing sentence, *Jerusalem, Jerusalem convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum* [Jerusalem, Jerusalem return to the Lord your God], after each. Probably because of this added complication, the precentor was responsible for appointing the singers. The rubric continues:

After each psalm and lesson, let one candle be extinguished from alternate sides by a servant sitting nearby until all the lights are out.⁵⁹

Each of the three shortened nocturns included three lessons (with responsories) and three psalms (with antiphons). Counting these with the five psalms (with antiphons) in Lauds made twenty-three, corresponding with the number of candles.

The last part of the Office, taking place in complete darkness, has been mentioned previously (see the section on Performing the Liturgy in the Anglo-Saxon, Romanesque, and Gothic Cathedrals, above). It ended with the whole community singing the final chant, *Christus dominus factus est obediens usque ad mortem* [Christ the Lord became obedient even unto death]. To the monks these words would have been a chilling reminder out of the dark that the Light of the World had been extinguished.⁶⁰ The account in the *Worcester Antiphoner* is somewhat similar, but includes verses sung by three *cantores* [soloists], and no longer uses the north and south chapels.⁶¹ It ends:

After this has been said, the prior raps the stall. On hearing this, the subsacrist takes the lantern, and, with the ceremony over and the lamp lit, they go to the dormitory.⁶²

The compilers of the *Concordia* seem to have been concerned that the final part of the ritual in full blackout could be too disturbing, and they

59 F160, fol. 59r.

60 Bedingfield (2002), p. 119.

61 The name *cantores* was given to a semi-chorus group.

62 F160, fol. 60v.

added a qualification: 'those who are not willing shall not in any way be compelled to follow this practice'.⁶³ There is no doubt however that the ceremony was intended to be a disquieting experience. It would have left receptive participants sobered and chastened as they left for the dormitory, meditating on the terror of sin-begotten darkness.

The Two-Part Rite of Public Penance

Bishop Wulfstan I (1002–16) was a strong advocate of public penance before a bishop. A penitential sentence was imposed for more serious public offences, examples of which might include oath breaking, refusal to pay tithes, marrying a nun, sorcery, and murder.⁶⁴ The penitent was expelled from the church on Ash Wednesday, when the first part of the rite was performed, and excluded until his reconciliation on Maundy Thursday. Wulfstan had highlighted the parallel with Adam in the book of Genesis, who was banished from paradise because of his wrongdoing.⁶⁵ This association is illustrated in a spandrel relief of c.1240 in the dado arcading of the south-east transept of the cathedral, which merges the Genesis story with the rite of public penance. It shows the expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise, but in place of the Garden of Eden is the unmistakeable carving of a church and a church door (Fig. 9). The carving emphasises Wulfstan's correlation of the penitential rite with the bible story, and also, incidentally, it shows that it was still in use over two centuries after his death.

The sections of the Pontifical written at Worcester around 1100 describe how, on Ash Wednesday, the penitents came before the bishop barefoot and dressed in wool, and after confessing their sin, sought forgiveness through penance.⁶⁶ The bishop marked them with ashes, and after some prayers and the antiphon *Exaudi nos Domine* [Hear us O Lord], they moved to the altar with the processional antiphon *Iuxta vestibulum et altare* [Near the porch and the altar] and the Litany. Here the bishop prostrated himself with the penitents on the pavement of the church, and the clergy stood around and chanted the seven penitential

63 Symons (1953), p. 37.

64 Redgate (2014), p. 223.

65 Bethurum (1957), p. 234.

66 GB-Ccc MS 146, pp. 16, 31.

psalms. The bishop continued with prayers for the penitents, and, with a repeated ritual of genuflexion and antiphonal chanting of *Kyrie eleyson*, *Christe eleyson*, *Kyrie eleyson*, the procession moved first to the door of the quire and then to the church entrance. There, the bishop led the penitents to the threshold of the building and expelled them, and followed this with a sermon to the people.



Fig. 9 A spandrel relief in Worcester Cathedral (photograph by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

For the reconciliation, the second part of the rite held on Maundy Thursday, the Pontifical reads, ‘At the third hour of the day, all [the penitents] having assembled should wait before the door of the basilica, barefoot and clad in wool’. The bishop was accompanied by one deacon, the penitents by another. The first deacon would chant *Dicite quare venistis* [State why you have come], and the other would answer *Indulgentie causa* [for forgiveness]. The bishop intoned *Venite*, then a ritual of responses, kneeling and rising, and *Kyrie eleyson*, *Christe eleyson*, *Kyrie eleyson* sung antiphonally, were followed by prayers. The pattern was repeated with *Venite* intoned twice and again with it intoned three times. *Venite* was the first word of an antiphon, which was then sung

through.⁶⁷ The bishop preached a sermon to the people, and then the archdeacon led the penitents one by one to the bishop, who restored them to the 'bosom of the church'. In the quire, the bishop and penitents prostrated themselves as the convent sang the Litany. Finally, the bishop addressed prayers on behalf of the prostrate penitents and gave them the absolution.

Bishop Wulfstan I was concerned that this rite was not used as widely as it should have been, but at Worcester it continued in use in the thirteenth century, and the *Antiphoner* includes a very similar liturgy to the one in the *Pontifical*.⁶⁸

The Easter Sepulchre Rite

This three-part rite was an important and dramatic expression of the Easter proclamation of the Resurrection. All three parts, known as the *depositio*, *elevatio*, and *visitatio*, have something of the theatre about them, but the last of these is often seen as the seed of the popular religious plays of the Middle Ages. It was re-enacted by the monks themselves. The rite is included in the *Regularis Concordia*, and so is likely to have formed part of the liturgy at Worcester from the late tenth century.⁶⁹

In the *depositio*, the cross was placed in a temporary sepulchre. The *Concordia* and the later processional of the *Worcester Antiphoner* place this after the adoration of the cross on Good Friday. The processional includes the three antiphons and the responsory that were sung as it happened, but there is no description of the sepulchre itself. Typically, by the fourteenth century, it lay on the north side of the quire; curtains would be drawn in front of the cross, and lights would burn before it. At the church of St Michael in Bedwardine, next to the cathedral, it consisted of a frame sitting on the altar, before which curtains hung on a wire, and a taper burned in front.⁷⁰ The priory is likely to have had something larger, but evidence for the time of the *Antiphoner* is rather scarce.⁷¹ We do know, though, that by the sixteenth century, the Blessed

67 Psalm 34:11 (Vulgate 33:12).

68 Wulfstan's homily for Ash Wednesday (GB-Ccc MS 190, pp. 351ff).

69 Symons (1953), pp. 44ff.

70 Amphlett (1896), 1547 and 1548 sections.

71 Sheingorn (1987), p. 34.

Sacrament was being placed in the sepulchre along with the cross.⁷²

The *Concordia* describes the second part of the ritual, the *elevatio*, as a secret one in which the sacrist was to come at night, before the call for Matins on Easter Day. His task was to remove the cross from the sepulchre and to place it in an appropriate place so that the ‘tomb’ might be found empty.⁷³ By the time of the *Worcester Antiphoner*, the *elevatio* was no longer secret but still did not involve the entire convent. The rubrics describe the waking of the participants on Easter morning as follows:

Before the hour of Matins, let the bishop be roused by the subsacrist. The night lights having been lit in the cloister, let him wake the prior, subprior, precentor and eight or more of the seniors who, without copes, ready and washed, vest themselves in the quire, where sufficient albs have been placed for the devotions of the convent. The bishop wears an alb, stole, cope, etc., and the prior an alb and cope.⁷⁴

A procession was formed to the sepulchre, where, after an antiphon and prayers, the bishop asperged and censed the cross before processing with it to the vestry. Meanwhile, the antiphon *Christus resurgens ex mortuis* [Christ rising from the dead] was sung. The cross (and hence the sepulchre) must have been a substantial size since it was borne together by the bishop, who shouldered the lower part, and the prior, who took the top. In the vestry, servants of the church replaced the cross in its usual place using a ladder.⁷⁵

The final part of the rite, the *visitatio*, occurred during Matins.⁷⁶ The Marys approached the angel guarding Christ’s empty tomb, who asked, softly and sweetly, ‘*Quem queritis?*’ [Whom do you seek?]. They replied, ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, and the angel answered, ‘He is not here. He has risen as he foretold. Go and announce that he has risen from the dead’. As they walked away, the angel insisted that the holy women should examine the empty tomb, and lifted the curtain, singing *Venite et videte locum* [Come and see the place], to display the cloth that represented Christ’s winding sheet.

⁷² MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246.

⁷³ Symons (1953), p. 49.

⁷⁴ F160, fol. 63v.

⁷⁵ The sacristy may have been the chapel to the south of the presbytery; Engel (2007), p. 192.

⁷⁶ Symons (1953), p. 49.

The *Vita Wulfstani* refers to the ‘trophy of the Lord’s banner’ in the western chapel of Oswald’s cathedral, and Klukas has suggested this was the gravesheet that was shown in this ritual.⁷⁷ Supporting this interpretation, Carol Heitz has found that the ceremony actually took place in the upper level of the westworks of continental churches during the Carolingian period.⁷⁸ It may well be, therefore, that the Easter sepulchre rite took place in the western chapel of Oswald’s cathedral.

The *visitatio* may not have been performed at Worcester at the time of the *Antiphoner*. Pamela Sheingorn has commented that it was much less popular in England than it was on the continent, and it is omitted from the Use of Sarum. Prior to the tenth-century synod at Winchester, the Matins gospel had been from Mark and concerned the visit of the two Marys to the sepulchre. After this synod, the Benedictine Use omitted the gospel reading at Matins and substituted the *visitatio* drama, which related the same story. The *Worcester Antiphoner* makes no mention of the *visitatio* but continues to omit the gospel reading.⁷⁹

Procession on Palm Sunday

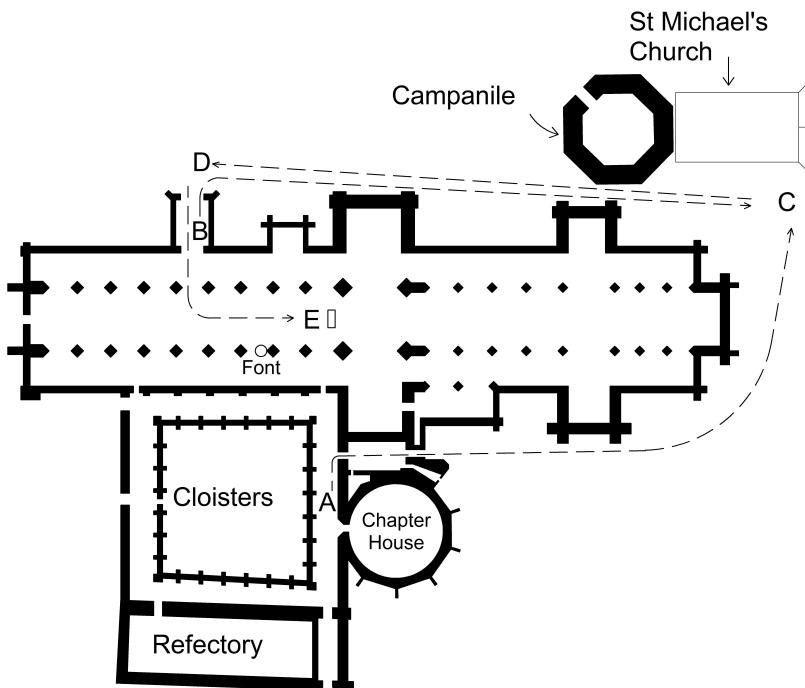
Although the timing of the Palm Sunday procession is not mentioned in the *Worcester Antiphoner*, it was usual for it to take place between Terce and Mass.⁸⁰ There were in fact two processions. After the palms had been blessed, two antiphons were sung while they were distributed and a procession was formed near the *armaria*, or book cupboards, in the east cloister walk (Fig. 10). This first procession represented the crowd. It left through the guest locutory (now the cathedral café) and moved through the cemetery to St Michael’s Church, singing several more antiphons on the way. A station was then held near the church, below an outstretched ‘tapestry of the procession’, which presumably showed Christ entering Jerusalem on a donkey. A station was a pause in the procession, during which antiphons were sung and collects read. The pause could be quite lengthy, so chairs with cushions were available for the bishop and dean if they wished to sit, but the remainder had to stand.

77 Darlington (1928), p. 9; Klukas (1978), p. 262.

78 Heitz (1963); Sheingorn (1987), pp. 14–15.

79 F160, fol. 64v; Sheingorn (1987), p. 32.

80 Hiley (2009), p. 19; F160, fols 104v, 105r.



A first procession starts near book cupboards
 B second (smaller) procession starts from north porch
 C first station near St Michael's Church
 D second station outside north porch
 E third station near Holy Cross altar

Fig. 10 The route of the Palm Sunday procession, thirteenth century (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Meanwhile two priests, wearing copes and playing the part of Christ and a disciple set out from the north porch carrying a ‘small precious *feretrum* [portable shrine]’ with the Blessed Sacrament on top. They moved towards St Michael’s, led by the priest of the infirmary, who carried the sacrist’s shining lamp.

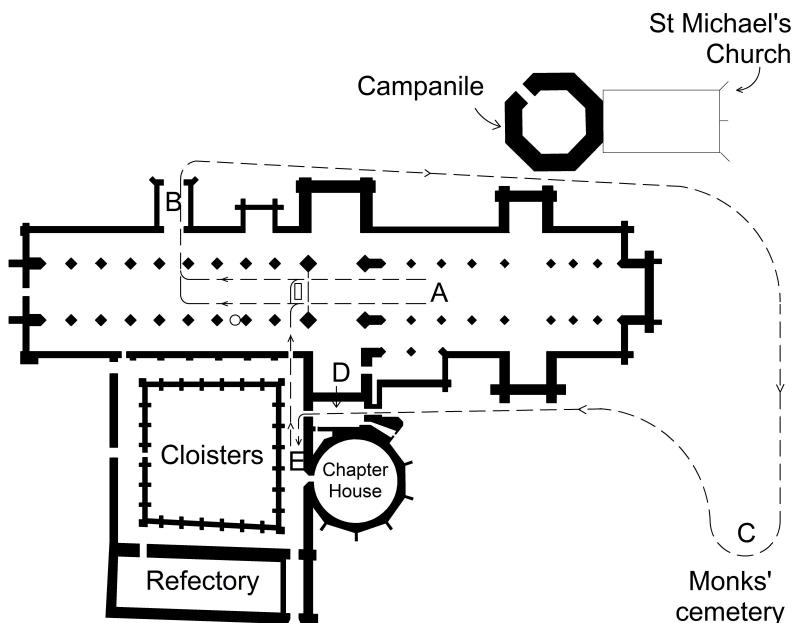
When the two processions had met and three further antiphons had been sung, all moved back to the north porch, and a second station took place. Outside the porch, the tapestry depicting the procession would be hung, with seats in a semicircle before it. Four or five of the better singers, with boys appointed by the precentor, then sang the hymn *Gloria, Laus et Honor* from ‘above the porch’, implying that there was an upper storey with openings or windows to project the sound.⁸¹ Children are mentioned only rarely

⁸¹ In the Gothic cathedral these openings may have been concealed behind the statues.

in the *Worcester Antiphoner*, but this ceremony was a traditional one. The use of boys chanting from an upper floor was widespread across Europe. Child singers were seen as symbolic of an angel choir, and the cathedral was playing the part of the Heavenly Jerusalem as well as the earthly one.⁸²

The procession ended with a further station near the font, probably at the altar of the Holy Cross at the Rood Screen. The crucifix, having been veiled since Passion Sunday, was uncovered and left exposed until after the Mass, after which it was veiled again until Easter.

St Wulfstan's Procession



- A start in the quire
- B exit via north porch (maius ostium)
- C pass through the cemetery
- D re-enter via guests' locutory
- E station at the book cupboards (armaria)
- A return to the quire

Fig. 11 The route of St Wulfstan's Procession, thirteenth century (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

⁸² Bedingfield (2002), p. 103. This may also account for their use (again in a raised position) at the end of *tenebrae*.

After Compline on the eve of festivals of rank *septem festum*, St Wulfstan's procession was held⁸³ (Fig. 11). The rubric in the *Worcester Antiphoner* reads:

The procession called Saint Wulfstan's assembles, as for a [feast of rank] *solemnis processio*, led by banners. Four sing *Salve festa dies* and, having sung the first verse in the middle of the quire, if the weather is fine, the procession leaves below through the great door. It proceeds through the cemetery, the *cantores* [the semi-chorus group of four] moving side by side before the borne cross and *brachia* [arm reliquaries], and enters through the guest locutory.

Sixteen verses of the famous sixth-century hymn *Salve festa dies* are included to take the procession around the outside of the cathedral. The great door (*maius ostium*) is identified elsewhere in the *Antiphoner* as the one with a porch, implying that it was the north door; the guest locutory (*locutorium hospitum*) is generally accepted as being the slype between the chapter house and the south-west transept. This passage was later to lead to the Guesten Hall, and was the only place within the priory where monks were allowed to talk to visitors.

The rubric continues:

In the cloister, a station is made in the usual way, and, one verse having been said,⁸⁴ [with] the *cantores* and deacons standing in the middle, they proceed into the church. The deacons and others stand in the usual way [in the quire], before whom the *cantores*, standing, say the verse *Qui crucifixus erat*. The convent sits and repeats *Salve* after each verse. Afterwards, the conclusion is brought about.

The usual station was in the east walk of the cloister near the *armaria*, and the hymn would proceed with the *cantores* singing the verses, between which the convent would repeat the first of these (*Salve festa dies*) as a refrain. The verse *Qui crucifixus erat deus* [God, who was crucified] was kept until the end and treated with special reverence, the *cantores* turning toward the cross to 'bring about the conclusion'.

83 F160, fols 192r, 111v.

84 The verb *dicere* (to say) is often used in the *Antiphoner* when it clearly means 'to sing'.



Fig. 12 An arm reliquary from the Netherlands of c.1230 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, public domain, <http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/471270>)

The use of arm reliquaries was significant. They were made in the form of a right arm with either an open palm or with index and middle fingers raised in a gesture of benediction (Fig. 12). The term *brachium* referred to the shape of the reliquary, and the relic inside did not necessarily come from an arm. The use of the plural in the rubric suggests that there were two, and at Worcester the most likely saints to have such reliquaries are St Wulfstan and St Oswald, although why the procession was only named after Wulfstan is unclear. The *brachia* would be held aloft through the cemetery, transmitting Wulfstan's and Oswald's blessings to the

souls of monks who had died.⁸⁵ At the same time, the singing of the hymn *Salve festa dies toto venerabilis aevo* [Hail festival day, venerable in all ages] would greet the coming festival, so that the procession served two purposes. The *septem festum* days were spread throughout the year, and, at least for those occurring in the winter months, the procession must have been undertaken in darkness.

* * *

This chapter has mainly concerned the period up to the writing of the *Worcester Antiphoner* and the construction of the Lady Chapel. It was a time of great advances. Under Bishop Wulfstan II the number of monks had grown to fifty; a new Romanesque cathedral had been built, with an innovative circular chapter house added shortly after; and a busy scriptorium had produced a substantial library of manuscripts. Martin Heale has observed that the finest achievements of the monasteries came in the early or high Middle Ages, and their ‘golden age’ was then over by 1200.⁸⁶ But this does not mean they became a spent force; they moved on in new ways. One advance at Worcester concerned the music. New polyphonic settings of the liturgy were used for certain feast days. Then, in a move to allow the laity regular access to some monastic services using polyphony, a stipendiary choir was introduced in a chapel open to the public. These new developments are discussed in the next chapter.

85 This is only known reference to St Wulfstan’s or St Oswald’s arm reliquaries.

86 Heale (2009), pp. 1, 6.

2. Early Polyphony and the Worcester Lady Chapel Choir (c.1250–1540)

Exciting advances were made in the use of polyphony in the liturgy of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. At first, this music was most actively cultivated in larger Benedictine monasteries like Worcester, sung by a tiny choir with one voice to each part. It was spirited, tuneful, and sophisticated, some of it rhythmical and almost dance-like, making a contrast with the calm, free rhythm of the plainchant. And much of it was written to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In modern times, it was at Worcester that evidence of this tradition first came to light again. In the early years of the twentieth century, scraps of music discovered in the chapter library proved to be the remains of early polyphonic compositions. There was no doubt that they were written for the liturgy, and some of them may have been used in the priory services. But were they written at Worcester? Or were they just copied there? Or neither of these? The answer is not clear, and to understand this dilemma, we need to consider their modern history.

While most priory music manuscripts were burnt after the Dissolution, the so-called ‘Worcester Fragments’ survived because they had been used in the priory bindery as pastedowns, flyleaves, spine stiffenings, or as covers for soft bindings.¹ By 1906 the canon librarian, the Revd James Wilson, had started removing these fragments from the bindings, and the Revd W H Frere, a leading expert in medieval liturgy, wrote an entry for the library catalogue published that year, noting the

¹ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246.

presence of harmony in them.² When they were identified as coming from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, there was much excitement, as there was no previously known polyphony surviving between the mid-thirteenth century and about 1415 for the whole country. Could they fill this gap and throw light on the development of music during a previously obscure period?

Anselm Hughes has written about how he approached Canon Wilson as a twenty-two year old music graduate in 1911, asking to study the fragments after he had been tipped off by Walter Frere.³ He had been pre-empted by the leading German scholar Friedrich Ludwig, who had visited Worcester a few months before and identified their age.⁴ Hughes, however, had the backing of Frere, and Wilson felt a lack of warmth towards Ludwig, and as a result, the twenty-two-year-old was granted the opportunity of a lifetime and the German scholar was excluded. It has been suggested that, because of his wide influence, Ludwig's rebuffal was responsible for a lack of widespread appreciation of the importance of British thirteenth-century polyphony even today.⁵

By 1924, Hughes had identified further manuscripts that had been bound at Worcester Priory using scraps of music. Some were at Oxford, in the Bodleian Library and at Magdalen College; others were in the British Library. Hughes wrote to the Bodleian librarian, Dr H H E Craster, asking if flyleaves of polyphony could be removed from a binding there. He confided to Canon Blake (Wilson's successor at Worcester), 'I think that if he looks at the binding [...] he will get rather interested'.⁶ He was not wrong. Astonishingly, perhaps precipitately, ten days later Edmund Craster was writing to say the music fragments had been removed from the Bodleian binding, and he wrote again three days after that to say he had organised the same at Magdalen College.

In August 1927, the six music sheets from the Worcester psalter at Magdalen College were gifted to the Worcester Cathedral Library by the college fellows,⁷ and the following year, Hughes published his research

² Floyer and Harrison (1906), pp. 158ff.

³ Hughes (1959), p. 25.

⁴ Add MS 95, L16 Letter of Friedrich Ludwig.

⁵ Losseff (1994), p. xxii, note 5.

⁶ Add MS 95, C20 Letters of Dr Craster and Anselm Hughes.

⁷ Add MS 95, M5 Letter from Magdalen College librarian to Canon Blake; A300 Chapter Acts, 3 September 1927.

as 'Worcester Mediaeval Harmony'.⁸ He had discovered that some of the fragments could be married up to form the remains of three codices, now known as reconstruction 1, reconstruction 2, and reconstruction 3, and wrote, 'it seems highly probable that Worcester was an important, if not the principal, centre of English musical culture in the fourteenth century'.⁹ 'The principal centre of English musical culture in the fourteenth century'? It was a brave claim, but one that would come to be disputed later. Over the next thirty years, more fragments were discovered elsewhere, concordances were established, and there were new interpretations of some aspects of the notation. Luther Dittmer, an American musicologist, produced a *Catalogue Raisonné* of one hundred and nine compositions, forty of which were complete or completable.¹⁰ This was followed in the 1970s by a new edition of the forty complete pieces by Ernest Sanders of Columbia University.¹¹

By the 1970s, Hughes' claims for Worcester were beginning to look extravagant, and one of the first to challenge them was Christopher Hohler, a scholar at the Courtauld Institute.¹² He identified the text of one motet as being in honour of a Dominican saint who would never have been venerated at Worcester. Also, several other compositions had been written for saints with feast days that were too low-ranking at the priory to involve the use of polyphony. These fragments seemed unlikely to have been composed at Worcester or to have been copied for use there.

Other scholars searched for any clues that would point to a Worcester link. There was no mention in the fragments of the Worcester saints, Wulfstan or Oswald, although of course only a fraction of the three reconstructed codices had survived. Nicky Losseff compared plainsong chants in the *Worcester Antiphoner* with the same melodies used as cantus firmi in the fragments and found too many differences to suggest a close link. It was possible, of course, that the chants sung were part of an oral tradition that might have varied from the *Antiphoner*, but she also found that a number of the chants did not appear in the *Antiphoner* at all.¹³

8 Hughes (1928).

9 Hughes (1928), p. 27.

10 Dittmer (1957).

11 Sanders (1978).

12 Hohler (1978).

13 Losseff (1994), pp. 72ff.

These arguments did not disprove a Worcester origin for the music, but they did not strengthen the case either.

Although the larger Benedictine monasteries were the most active centres for the cultivation of polyphony up to the mid-fourteenth century, no single one has emerged as the ‘principal centre of English musical culture’.¹⁴ Many fragments of thirteenth and fourteenth century polyphony have now been discovered elsewhere, although the Worcester Fragments still represent the largest collection arising from a single bindery.¹⁵ The frequency of concordances¹⁶ and contrafacta (the same music used for different texts) between fragments from different monasteries suggests that much of the repertory was shared and that music manuscripts may have circulated between houses to pool resources. It is possible that some, at least, of the Worcester Fragments may have come from such circulating manuscripts.

Elaborating the Liturgy with Polyphony

Polyphony provided a new way to elaborate the liturgy, and in the thirteenth century there was interest in using tropes for polyphonic settings of the plainchant. These served to mark the solemnity of some feasts, to comment on the importance of certain saints, but in particular to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary. Two examples from the Worcester Fragments will illustrate this.

The three-voiced *Alleluya psallat hec familia* has become one of the best-known of these compositions after an edition was published by Denis Stevens in 1965. The first section consists of new words and music in all parts, and the upper two voices incorporate voice-exchange, in which phrases are repeated with the vocal parts swapped in a form known as *rondellus* (Fig. 13). The contrast between this lively, rhythmical music and the plainsong is startling, and the setting has more in common with the early secular song *Sumer is icumen in* than the traditional chant of the Mass, but it does express the joy of the textual trope:

¹⁴ Harrison (1963), p. 113; Bowers (1975), pp. 2062–3; Lefferts (2012) (under ‘Provenance’).

¹⁵ The Worcester Fragments can be viewed online at <https://www.diamm.ac.uk/>

¹⁶ Losseff (1994), pp.76 ff, tables 1 and 2.

Alleluia, let this community sing,
 Alleluia, clash the cymbals,
 Alleluia, strike the lyre in joyful company with harmony,
 Alleluia, let us sing with jubilation and praise.

The musical transcription shows three staves representing the Triplum, Duplum, and Tenor voices. The Tenor voice is the primary vocal part, singing the Alleluia phrase in three different melodic settings: 'psal-lat', 'con-ci-nat', and 'fa-mi-li-a'. The Duplum voice provides harmonic support, also singing 'Al - le - lu - ya' and 'hec fa-mi-li-a'. The Triplum voice is mostly silent, with a single note 'A' at the beginning. The music is in common time (indicated by '8') and consists of short note values (eighth notes).

Fig. 13 Transcription of the start of the prelude section of *Alleluya psallat hec familia*
 (based on Sanders (1978))

The second section is the Alleluia, which incorporates the start of the verse *Virga Jesse floruit* [The rod of Jesse has blossomed] in the tenor. Originally a further polyphonic interlude would have followed, and then a polyphonic setting of the verse, but these have not survived.

It may be that the Alleluia *Virga Jesse floruit* was not one used at Worcester. Plainchant used for the Main Mass in the quire was copied into the gradual which forms part of the so-called *Worcester Antiphoner*, and the Alleluia does not appear there.¹⁷ There is no separate gradual for Mass in the Lady Chapel, but scholars believe that the chants used in this chapel were those of the Marian feast days as sung in the quire.

¹⁷ As well as Marian feast days and their octaves, the priory held Mass and Office for the Virgin Mary on Saturdays.

Its absence from the *Worcester Antiphoner*, therefore, implies it was not used in the Lady Chapel either.¹⁸ However, the exuberance, bounding rhythm, and the use of voice-exchange and tropes are not atypical of these settings, and so it gives some notion of the type of Alleluia that would have been heard in Worcester Cathedral in the thirteenth century.

A second example of polyphony from the Worcester Fragments is the great responsory *Gaude Maria virgo* [Rejoice, O Virgin Mary]. This was sung at Worcester at Matins and Vespers of the Purification (Candlemas).¹⁹ Great responsories were among the more elaborate of the plainsong chants. On Sundays and feast days, four were sung at each of the three nocturns of Matins with a single one at Vespers. In each case the responsory would follow a lesson, and in its simplest form, a responsory consisted of these parts:

respond – verse – respond – *Gloria Patri* – respond²⁰

Sometimes the repetition of the respond was shortened, and more elaborate responsories could have more than one verse. The plainsong version of *Gaude Maria virgo* in the *Worcester Antiphoner* is followed in the manuscript by an extended melisma, perhaps intended to be used for the final repeat of the respond. It is to be sung on the penultimate word of the respond and is followed by a further ramification, in which the melisma is divided into eight phrases, each sung to a line of a prosula and then repeated to a vocalised ‘a’. The eight lines of the prosula in English are:

Inviolate, immaculate and chaste art thou, O Mary,
 Who art made a shining gate of heaven,
 O kind and most beloved mother of Christ,
 Receive our devoted praise and prayer,
 Our faithful voices and hearts now entreat this,
 That our souls and bodies may be pure,
 Grant through thy most sweet prayers,
 O beauteous one, that we may enjoy everlasting life.

¹⁸ Bowers (1994), p. 213; Harper et al. (2019), Introduction to Book 1 (regarding the Use of Sarum).

¹⁹ F160, fols 201v–202r.

²⁰ Hiley (2009), pp. 47ff.

Fig. 14 Transcription of the polyphonic setting of the first line of melisma for the responsory *Gaude Maria virgo* (based on Sanders (1978))

The polyphonic version (Fig. 14) uses the same melisma phrases, over which two upper voices sing newly written music, setting an expanded version of the prosula text; for example, the first two lines read:

Inviolate, immaculate mother, spotless and chaste art thou, O
Virgin Mary,
Who art crowned queen, friend of the king on high, glory of
the angels, and a shining gate of heaven

It appears most likely that these upper voices sang not over the sung prosula phrases in the lowest part (as indicated by Ernest Sanders in his edition), but over the vocalised repeats of these phrases (as recorded by Denis Stevens in 1975).²¹ This responsory setting, like much of the music

²¹ This is suggested by the frequent rests breaking up the melisma. Sanders (1978), no. 68; *The Worcester Fragments*, Accademia Monteverdiana directed by Denis Stevens (1975), Nonesuch LP, H-71308.

sung by this tiny choir of men's voices, was written to honour the Blessed Virgin Mary.²² Before the formation of a professional Lady Chapel choir in the fourteenth century, it was probably sung by members of the community, who may have contributed polyphony both to services in the Lady Chapel and the Quire.²³

The Lady Chapel Choir

Much of the research on Lady Chapel choirs, including that at Worcester, has been done by Roger Bowers, who has clarified much that was obscure in the sung polyphony of this period.²⁴ Its history at Worcester started in 1310, when a new altar was consecrated in the nave in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary.²⁵ This new altar, the fourth in the cathedral to be dedicated to Mary,²⁶ was to become significant as the place early polyphony would be sung by a choir of stipendiary clerks.

The Site of the Nave Lady Chapel

To consider the site of this new nave altar, we need to start with the greatest recent advance in the understanding of the liturgical use of the cathedral, made by Ute Engel. Engel argued carefully and persuasively that the monastic liturgical quire, which had occupied the crossing and eastern bay(s) of the Romanesque nave, moved after completion of the Lady Chapel at the east end to its present position above the crypt.²⁷ The pulpitum, later to be used as an organ gallery, occupied the space between the eastern piers of the crossing, and the rood screen stretched between the western piers. Prior to Engel's study of the cathedral, writer

22 Harrison (1963), p. 156.

23 A 'Thomas *organista*' (organist or singer of polyphony) witnessed late thirteenth century leases (B925, B1452, B1457, B1468, B1470)—perhaps a lay singer supporting the monk's polyphony.

24 See Bowers (1975), especially regarding Worcester, pp. 4078ff, 6047ff, and appendix p. A061. A list of Bowers' publications is available online at <https://www.mus.cam.ac.uk/directory/roger-bowers>

25 A5 Liber Albus, fol. 45v.

26 The others were in the sacristy, first mentioned in the 1190s (B1451 and B1450 Grant and Covenant regarding donation of a virgate of land); at the east crossing, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and St Oswald in 1218; and in the retrochoir Lady Chapel.

27 Engel (2007), pp. 185ff.

after writer had followed Robert Willis, the Cambridge academic and engineer. Willis misinterpreted a statement that has now been shown to originally have been made by a cathedral canon, Nathaniel Tomkins, and believed that the liturgical quire continued to extend into the two eastern bays of the nave.²⁸ This new insight affects our interpretation of much else, including the location of the nave Lady Chapel.

The only information given by the archives for the site of the chapel is that it was near a red door: *ad altare beate marie at rededore*, or *ad rubeum ostium*, or just ‘our Ladye Chapel in ye boke [sic] of ye church’, the latter probably meaning no more than it was sited in the nave.²⁹ Several possibilities have been considered.³⁰ Ivor Atkins writing in 1918 suggested it was in the north aisle of the nave; Michael Craze suggested the left-hand half of the nave in the fifth, sixth, and seventh bays; Joan Greatrex placed it at the eastern end of the nave; and Ute Engel, in the most closely argued account, chose the third and fourth bays from the east in the north aisle of the nave.

There is a more likely site for the chapel, however. New altars would often be created in parts of the cathedral as they were rebuilt, and it was the north aisle of the nave that was the focus of such work from the early years of the fourteenth century. The best clue to which part of the aisle was used lies in the figural roof bosses, which often seem to have been placed quite carefully above appropriate altars or chapels. In the north aisle there are three Marian bosses. Immediately inside the north door, not surprisingly for a church dedicated to the Virgin, is a boss representing her coronation as Queen of Heaven. The other two are in the first and second bays from the east and depict the Annunciation and the Nativity. It seems very likely that these two bosses at the east end of the aisle were applied to the recently built vaulting immediately above what was intended from the first to be a two-bay Lady Chapel and not just an altar. The eastern end of the nave would have been considered the most holy part of it, and for a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary this was a significant consideration. It is most unlikely that any

²⁸ Gilbert (2016), pp. 214, 217.

²⁹ For example: B1232 Covenant and A3 Liber Pensionum, fol. 54v; C105 Cellarer’s Roll, 1495–6; C426 Sacrist’s Roll, 1501–2; A12 Miscellaneous volume, fol. 77v; A11 Journal of Prior More, fol. 139v.

³⁰ Atkins (1918), p. 7; Craze (1984), p. 5; Greatrex (2004), p. 159, footnote 13; Engel (2007), p. 196.

but the most sacred place would have been chosen, and indeed at Canterbury Cathedral Priory this very site—the east end of the north aisle of the nave—had been used for a Lady Chapel from about 1130.³¹ It was also the first part of the aisle to be rebuilt; the date for moving to the next phase is not known, but evidence of a break in the building process between the second and third bays has been observed in the roof space, so there may have been some delay.³² This delay has sometimes been attributed to the arrival of the Black Death (plague) epidemic in the 1340s. Finally, a lamp that still hangs from the boss of Christ's Nativity may be the single remaining vestige of this long-lost chapel. The lamp has been replaced, but this site for it is likely to be ancient. An inventory of 1535 includes 'a lampe of brasse yn owr lady chapel hangyng', and, as it follows a long list of music used by the choir serving the Lady and Jesus Chapels, it probably refers to the nave chapel rather than the retrochoir one. This origin for the lamp would explain why it now hangs in an otherwise oddly random place.³³

Which was the red door? Engel cites an article by Barbara Deimling, who found that church red doors in general marked entrances that were sites of court hearings.³⁴ Often they opened into porches that faced onto public areas. Deimling's best documented examples are from Germany, although she does identify churches in France, the Netherlands and Switzerland with red doors. She also quotes a Dutch phrase, *voor de rode deur moeten gan*, meaning 'must go to the red door', in the sense of being called before a court. On this basis, at Worcester, the best candidate for the 'red door' would appear to be the north door. But how valid is this evidence when applied to England? Known examples of cathedral red doors in England are rather uncommon but do not necessarily conform to this pattern.

At Norwich, an *hostea rubea* is mentioned in the sacrist's accounts because offerings were made there at an image of the Trinity. This was identified by Beeching as the north door of the presbytery, an external door of the church, but leading to the bishop's palace and not a public

31 Blockley et al. (1997), p. 123.

32 Engel (2007), p. 171. Leland credits Bishop Cobham (1317–27) for the vault.

33 GB-Lbl Harley MS 604, fol. 118r; the present lamp is a 1978 replacement (A406 Chronicle of cathedral events, 1968–2001).

34 Engel (2007), p. 196; Deimling (1998).

area.³⁵ At Canterbury, thirteenth-century rules for novices at Christ Church Priory who arrive late include this instruction:

Of penance done by one coming late to the church

[...] if he arrives during the first psalm, he shall enter in this wise: lowering his hood and entering by the red door or the other door near the prior, he shall go to the steps, and there in the middle he shall first bow to the altar³⁶

Although the red door is not clearly identified here, it would appear to refer to a door inside the church leading to the quire, the door near the prior being that under the pulpitum. Better known and documented is a red door in a wall constructed in 1381–2 diagonally across the north-west transept at Canterbury.³⁷ This wall divided the monks' route between the cloisters and the quire from the pilgrims' access to the Martyrdom Altar. Again, the red door does not follow the pattern of those investigated by Deimling on the continent and casts doubt on whether her conclusions can be generally applied in England.

If the 'Lady Chapel by the red door' at Worcester was in the first two bays of the north nave aisle, the two candidates for the red door would be the doorway into the Jesus Chapel and a doorway from the east end of the chapel into the north-west transept. The latter would make it a communicating door between the monastic and public areas of the church, as was the red door at Canterbury. In 1381 the chapel was enclosed and the door replaced, as a chronicle, probably copied in the sixteenth century from earlier evidence, records:

The sacrist mentioned above [John Lyndsey] made an enclosure around the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin near the red door, removing [or moving] this door and placing a new one there.³⁸

The Latin (*amovendo*) could mean 'removing' or 'moving'. In the case of a door into the north-west transept, if it was moved, then shifting it a little to the side might have allowed better access past the Lady Chapel altar.

35 Beeching (1915).

36 Translation from Knowles (1951), p. 141; GB-Ccc MS 441, p. 378.

37 Blockley et al. (1997), p. 142, and plan opposite, p. 128.

38 A12 Miscellaneous volume, fol. 77v, *Aedificiorum chronologia*.

The Lady Chapel Choir from Its Foundation to the 1480s

The history of the Lady Chapel choir falls into two parts: the first from its foundation at some time during the fourteenth century until about 1480, and the second from that time until the Dissolution.³⁹

In the years following the dedication of the new altar in honour of Blessed Mary, various laymen made donations that enabled a chaplain to be appointed with an annual salary of a hundred shillings.⁴⁰ An obedientary, called the *custos* or *magister capelle Beate Marie* [warden or master of the chapel of Blessed Mary] had existed since the thirteenth century,⁴¹ but his duties now expanded to include the nave chapel as well as that in the retrochoir. Obedientaries were monks who owed obedience to the prior, but who held budgetary responsibility for a department, and the account rolls for this obedientary provide most of the evidence we have for the early Lady Chapel choir.

During the 1390s, the earliest surviving accounts for the master of the chapel, there were between two and four singing clerks and two boys, but it is likely that the choir predated this. References to chapel clerks in the singular may just refer to servers at Mass, but in the 1370s they are mentioned in the plural and are likely to have been singing-men.⁴² This implies that the choir was already in existence at the time, and very few Lady Chapel choirs are known to have started so early. The singing clerks were not monks and they lived outside the monastery. John Herford, for example, who served from 1391 or before to 1411, was the son of a draper and leased a house from the convent.⁴³ They were paid between twenty and forty shillings a year and were supplied with a coloured livery, described as *de secta armigerorum domini prioris* [of the suit of esquires of the lord prior], as well as surplices, albs, and for winter, furs. The boys also wore the livery and surplices.⁴⁴

The account rolls do not distinguish between the Lady Chapels in the

39 The history of the Lady Chapel choir has been carefully researched by Dr Roger Bowers and much of this account derives from his work; see Bowers (1975), pp. 4078ff, 6047ff, and appendix p. A061.

40 B1232 Covenant and A3 *Liber pensionum*, fol. 54v; Price (1925), p. 51; *Calendar of the Patent Rolls* (1893, 1900, 1907), vol. 2, p. 338; vol. 5, p. 6; vol. 9, p. 500.

41 C51 Cellarer's Roll, 1291–2.

42 Greatrex (1997), p. 857.

43 C187 Almoner's Roll, 1404–5.

44 C252, 1394–5; C258, 1402–3; C251, 1392–3.

retrochoir and the nave. After the nave Lady Chapel was established, most of the rents and income received would have been needed to pay for the secular priest and singing clerks there, but some payments still related to the chapel in the retrochoir. An entry reading, 'for painting an image of Blessed Mary at the foot of Bishop Blois', for example, must refer to the latter, because Bishop William Blois, who had laid the foundation stone of the east front in 1224, had his tomb there.⁴⁵ This makes interpretation of the evidence difficult, but we can still get some impression of the nave chapel before it was rebuilt in the 1480s. In 1381 an enclosure of some sort was built around it.⁴⁶ A coloured cloth hung near (perhaps behind) the clerks,⁴⁷ for whom there were stalls.⁴⁸ Possibly relating to this chapel are entries referring to the chapel being paved, to there being a painting on the altar,⁴⁹ two silver candelabras,⁵⁰ nineteen pewter plates with pins for candles,⁵¹ four painted images,⁵² an iron bowl for burning charcoal, presumably for warmth,⁵³ and, for Christmas, a star.⁵⁴ An inventory of 1391–2, made by the *magister capelle*, lists various requirements for the Mass. These include many vestments, a thurible of gilded copper with silver chains, an ivory pyx, and two bronze basins for the priest to wash his hands.⁵⁵ Once again, although some items in this inventory must refer to the nave chapel (surplices for the clerks and caps for the boys), it is not clear that they all do.

From the start of accounts in the 1390s for nearly thirty years, the choir included boys. There were never more than three, and as they had no stipend, they appear in the accounts only when clothes were supplied (tunics, shirts, shoes, hose), or cloth for their livery, or surplices. During this time the boys are thought to have sung the plainsong an octave above the men, and were instructed by one of the clerks. In a rare entry, this teacher is named as one John Ylleway, who

⁴⁵ C254, 1396–7.

⁴⁶ A12, fol. 77v.

⁴⁷ C258, 1402–3.

⁴⁸ C267, 1414–15.

⁴⁹ C253, 1395–6.

⁵⁰ C283, 1474–5.

⁵¹ C281, 1467–8.

⁵² C281, 1467–8.

⁵³ C279a, 1435–6.

⁵⁴ C278, 1429–30.

⁵⁵ B1870 Inventory.

received a gratuity for the task in 1394–5.⁵⁶ In a sense the boys were supernumerary, and Roger Bowers has suggested they may have been included as part of the reaction against Lollardy.⁵⁷ In the second half of the fourteenth century, John Wyclif had written, ‘bi ther grete criyng of song, as deschaunt, countre note & orgene, thei ben lettid fro studynge and prechynge of the gospel’,⁵⁸ and one boy in 1414–15 seems to have been taught the improvised form of polyphony known as discant, which Wyclif shunned. His name was T Hulet; he had been a singing-boy for about six years, and as a reward he was given a gift of two shillings.⁵⁹

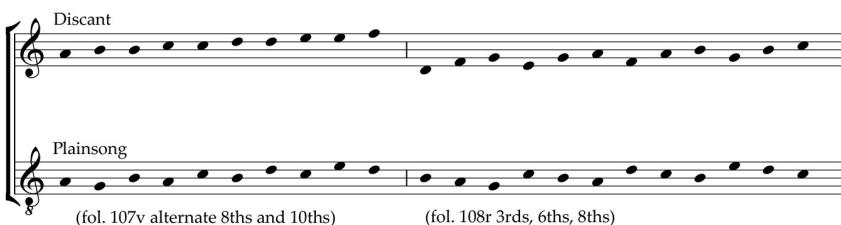


Fig. 15 Examples of discant from Leonel Power’s manuscript (quoted from Meech (1935), p. 249)

The technique involved improvisation by a soloist of a note-against-note part to counterpoint a plainchant tenor, according to set rules (Fig. 15). It was explained by the composer Leonel Power in a treatise for singers, composers, and teachers who aimed ‘to enform a childe in his counterpoyn’.⁶⁰ Power had gained experience in this by teaching singing-boys at the household chapel of the Duke of Clarence and at Canterbury Cathedral Priory. The priory at Worcester is not known to have been violently opposed to the Lollards; in fact, Bishop Wakefield (1375–95) was ‘unconcerned and even dilatory’ when asked to act on such heresy by the archbishop,⁶¹ but increasing measures were being taken generally by Church and State during the reign of Henry IV, and it may have seemed wise to demonstrate the priory’s orthodoxy.

56 C252, 1394–5.

57 Bowers (1975), p. 4053.

58 Matthews (1880), p. 77.

59 *For cantanti et organizanti in capella per vices.*

60 C267, 1414–15; Lionel Power’s treatise: GB-Lbl Lansdowne MS 763; Meech (1935), p. 242.

61 This is the assessment of Paul Marett, the editor of the bishop’s register. See Marett (1972), pp. xx and xli.

The cooperation and sharing of resources between institutions suggested by the surviving music fragments is also borne out by the account rolls of the Worcester *magister capelle*. Singing clerks visited not only from Benedictine monasteries like Evesham and Malmesbury Abbeys but also the secular cathedral at Lichfield and the private chapel of Lady Bergavenny. Accommodation was provided for them in the Guesten Hall (*hostilaria*). They were professional singers, and the purpose of the visits was no doubt partly to exchange knowledge and music but also to help on important occasions. Clerks from the chapel of Lady Bergavenny sang on St George's Day in 1421, and *confratres* boosted numbers in the choir in 1435–6 at Christmas and Easter.⁶² *Confratres* were monks from the confraternity, a group of associated Benedictine monasteries—the abbeys of Evesham, Chertsey, Bath, Pershore, Winchcombe, and Gloucester.⁶³ They came again for the Feast of the Oblation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at a time when the number of stipendiary clerks had fallen to one.⁶⁴ This was a festival to commemorate the day on which Anne and Joachim took their child, Mary, to the temple to dedicate her life to God's service.

From 1437 there is a gap of thirty years in the chapel accounts, which makes it difficult to know how the choir developed during this time. By the time the rolls restart in 1467, changes were evolving in sung polyphony across the country. A simplification of the notation was paralleled by a move from solo to choral polyphony and the inclusion of a treble and bass line to make five parts: treble, alto, two tenor parts, and bass. Payments were made to the master of the chapel for acquiring 'square note' for singing in 1463–4, and this is thought to be a term for the new notation, although scholars are still uncertain of its precise nature.⁶⁵

From at least 1467 to 1484, the chief singing clerk was Richard Grene, a married man who, with his wife Joan, leased a priory house in the precincts.⁶⁶ The choir for most of this time consisted of two clerks and

⁶² C271, 1420–1; the clerks visited again in the following two years: C272a and C272.

⁶³ Hamilton (1910), p. xxi.

⁶⁴ C279a, 1435–6.

⁶⁵ C492a Cellarer's Roll, 1463–4, *pro le squarenote cantando*; one possibility being considered for 'square note' is a simplified notation employing square notes like that of plainsong, called 'strene notation', described by Benham (1993).

⁶⁶ A6i Register, fol. 54v.

two singing-boys, supplemented by visiting singers (*cantatores extranei*) and probably by monks. Payments show that new music was actively being sought, including Mass settings copied in the ‘square note’ notation. For the reception of the new bishop, John Alcock, in 1476, a setting of the responsory *Honor virtus* [Honour, virtue], was acquired from the Duke of Clarence’s chapel.⁶⁷

Compared with choirs in collegiate chapels at this time, the choir was miniature. For example, New College, Oxford, had sixteen singing-boys with ten secular priests and three clerks from the 1390s.⁶⁸ These choirs had a different role from the Lady Chapel choirs, though: they sang a full set of eight Office Hours along with two Masses each day, and so were hardly comparable. In fact, the choir at Worcester Cathedral was on the point of being remodelled; it was to grow, but within the limits of the chapel’s small size.

Bishop John Alcock (1476–86) became known for his building projects and endowments, and the first of these at Worcester was to be the Lady Chapel and its choir. He made a gift of £100 to the office of the *magister capelle* in 1480, following which the number of boys was increased to four or five in Richard Grene’s last three years. Then, with the addition of rents from several properties that Alcock allocated to the chapel, Grene was replaced by a much higher-paid clerk, John Hampton. Richard Grene had held the title *organista* [organist or singer of polyphony, or both] and had received 20s annually. Hampton, who had been singing as a chapel clerk in Grene’s place from 1484, was called *organista ac instructor puerorum capelle* [organist or singer of polyphony and instructor of the boys of the chapel]⁶⁹ and was paid four times as much. Hampton has been identified as a singing clerk of the collegiate church of Westbury-on-Trym, near Bristol, and was mentioned in a will of 1474.⁷⁰ It is possible he was headhunted by Bishop Alcock; Westbury lay in the Worcester diocese, and Alcock had performed an official visitation there in 1482.

⁶⁷ Cellarer’s Rolls: C492a (1463–4); C95 (1464–5); C96 (1465–6); C284 (1475–6).

⁶⁸ Harrison (1963), pp. 32–6.

⁶⁹ C288, 1489–90; C286, 1483–4.

⁷⁰ Will of the dean, William Carynge, PCC, GB-Lna PROB 11/6/265, proved 29 November 1474.

Re-Founding the Chapel and Choir by Bishop John Alcock

Alcock intended the chapel to be his chantry and, according to Leland, his burial place.⁷¹ He set down quite specific requirements for services there and intended a monk in priest's orders to celebrate Mass for his soul and those of his parents.⁷² Each Sunday a Mass of the day or of the Trinity was to be said, except on the most important festivals, when the length of the quire celebrations would probably not permit it. On weekday festivals, a votive Mass was to take place according to a set scheme: for Mondays *de Sancto Spiritu*, for Tuesdays *de Salus populi*, for Wednesdays *Requiem eternam* for the dead, for Thursdays *de corpore Christi*, for Fridays *de Nomine Jesu* or *de quinque plagis Christi* or *de Sancta cruce*, for Saturdays *de Sancta Maria*. These chantry Masses would have been a supplement to the daily Lady Mass, forming a cursus all of their own and celebrated without the choir. In addition, after Vespers, the bishop requested either the responsory *O Maria et Johannes* with its verse and *Gloria patri*, or the antiphon *Stelle claritatis* [Star of brightness] with a prayer.

Meanwhile, Bishop Alcock set about rebuilding the chapel.⁷³ There is no description of this from the time, but when it was dismantled after the Dissolution, it was called 'our ladies chappell made with white stone and with Iron within and without'.⁷⁴ The ironwork, or some of it, may date from the early sixteenth century, as a John Smyth was paid for iron bars around the chapel in 1501–2.⁷⁵ It also had a statue of the Virgin, which was significant enough for the chaplain to be paid a separate fee for its care.⁷⁶ This can probably be identified as the bequest of a former Bishop of Worcester, Thomas Bourchier, who died in 1486, leaving the priory an image of Our Lady standing in the sun with the child in her arms, all of silver gilt. It was embellished with six pinnacles, on each of which there was an angel with a thurible, and was valued at a costly £69 5s.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Hearne (1769), vol. 8, p. 104.

⁷² A6i, fol. 81v, 17 December 1478.

⁷³ A6i, fol. 82; Hearne (1796), vol. 8, p. 104.

⁷⁴ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246.

⁷⁵ C426 Sacrist's Accounts, 1501–2.

⁷⁶ C430 and A17 Accounts, p. 144; Wilson (1907), p. 37.

⁷⁷ Duncan (1900), p. 245.

By 1486, when the prior and convent appointed John Hampton, the rebuilding of the chapel was complete. By his deed of appointment, he was required to attend quire services on the more important festivals and to sing Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary daily, Jesus Mass on Fridays, and a Jesus Antiphon and Marian Antiphon (*Salve Regina*) on Lenten Fridays.⁷⁸ He was also expected to train the eight singing-boys to sing a daily antiphon for the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Lady Chapel after Vespers. His presence in the quire was no doubt required during five days in July 1495, when the priory had the honour of hosting King Henry VII. The visit formed part of the king's progress through the Welsh marches at a time that his throne was being threatened by Yorkist uprisings. It seems likely that he would have attended Mass in the quire, no doubt celebrated with polyphonic music. He may also have been offered secular entertainment in the form of 'balades' composed by John Hampton, for which Hampton received somewhat tardy payment in November.⁷⁹

John Hampton was the only clerk of the re-founded chapel to appear in the accounts until 1516, when he was joined by a second.⁸⁰ His only surviving composition, in the Eton Choirbook, confirms that a choir of five parts was available, but at the time of his appointment only used in the Lady and Jesus Chapels, as the singing-boys did not take part in the quire. The two professional clerks would have needed supplementing either by monks or by singers employed from elsewhere to make a full choir of five parts. The rather small payments for external singers, sometimes only 3s 4d for the whole year, suggest that monks must have usually provided the missing adult vocal parts.

In 1522 John Hampton was succeeded by Daniel Boys, whose duties were similar to Hampton's but now included training the boys to sing at Mass and Vespers in the quire for some feasts.⁸¹ Daniel Boys was allowed to nominate one of the eight boys, a responsibility previously held by the prior and monks themselves, and he was also expected to teach discant, either sung or played on the organ, to any boy requesting it. From the time of his arrival, he would have needed new polyphony for Mass and

78 A6i, fol. 82, 30 July 1486; Atkins (1918), p. 12.

79 Atkins (1918), p. 14.

80 A12, fol. 41r, *Magister capelle* Accounts, 1516.

81 A6ii Register, fol. 127v, translated by Atkins (1918), pp. 16ff.

Vespers on the more important feastdays when the singing-boys were taking part, and in his first year, paper was bought for newly-composed Masses. Each year then brought fresh compositions. First there was a payment for composing and copying two Magnificats and a Mass in ‘square note’, then for another Mass in five parts the following year, and two antiphons were purchased, and a book of pricksong (polyphony) was copied the year after.⁸² One of the monks who may have sung with the choir was William Wolverley, and he copied eight complete five-part Magnificats in 1532.⁸³ An inventory of the priory taken in 1535 lists the contents of the music library for the choir under the heading ‘Maist’ of the Chapell’. It was quite extensive, with no hint of tailing-off of the music in these years approaching the Dissolution:⁸⁴

[FOR MASS]

[Choirbook]

a masse bocke of []⁸⁵ with pryckesonge, wheryn ys v parts, and
iiij parts

[Partbooks]

iiij pryckesong masse bockes of pawper
iiij lyttle pryckesonge bocks of masses
v masse bockes of v parts

[Music on scrolls]

ij masses of v partes yn parchement skrowlls

[FOR PROCESSIONS]

v bockes with salve festa dies and skrolls belongynge to them

[FOR OFFICE]

[Choirbooks]

a pawper bocke with the vitatoris benedict' te deum⁸⁶ yn
pryckyng

⁸² *Magister capelle* Accounts: A17, p. 127 (1521–2); A17, p. 202 (1522–3); A17, p. 267 (1523–4).

⁸³ Fegan (1913), p. 347 The name for a Magnificat is here *exultavit*, as only the even verses were set in polyphony, the second verse starting *Et exultavit*.

⁸⁴ Lbl Harley MS 604, fol. 118; Bowers (2007), pp. 45–6. The list has been re-ordered under editorial headings. The prior had his own copies of music, and a list of his acquisitions in 1518 includes ‘A sequens boke in the prior’s chappell’, ‘A sawter bok with the ymmes newe wryt’ and ‘A processional boke new made and noted’ (A12, fol. 3r).

⁸⁵ Defect in manuscript.

⁸⁶ Invitatory, Benedictus, and Te Deum.

[FOR VOTIVE ANTIphon]

[Choirbooks]

ij hother⁸⁷ bockes . . . on with antems, and salves yn hym
a parchment bocke of salves burdyde⁸⁸

[Music on scrolls]

iiij or iiiij antems in scrowes⁸⁹

[UNCERTAIN]

ij pawper bockes yn them be the v parts of other songs
a sq[uare] note bocke burdyde
a pawper bocke of iiiij parts

The list includes both choirbooks and partbooks, as well as scrolls. Choirbooks, in which all the vocal parts were in one book, usually arranged across a double page, were becoming old-fashioned at this time and being replaced by sets of partbooks, which each contained the music for a single voice part. It has been suggested that scrolls of music were easier to carry in procession, which may explain their use for the hymn *Salve festa dies*.⁹⁰

Mass and Antiphon of the Name of Jesus

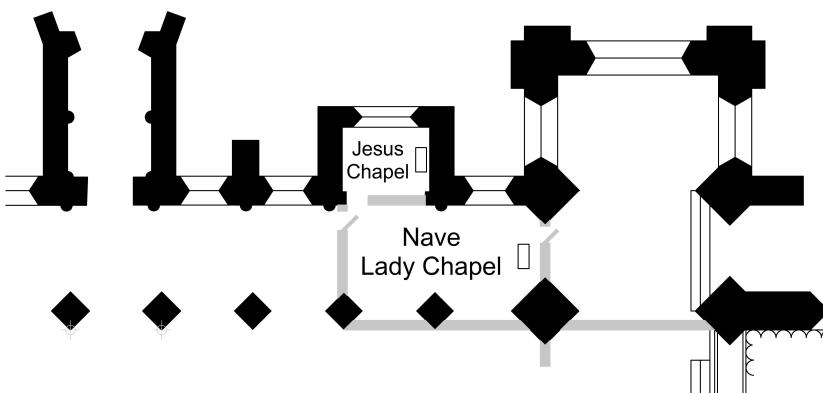


Fig. 16 Reconstructed plan showing positions of Jesus Chapel and Nave Lady Chapel (drawn by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

⁸⁷ Other.

⁸⁸ Boarded, i.e., bound with hard covers.

⁸⁹ Scrolls.

⁹⁰ See further <https://medievalsheets.com/>

Refounding the nave Lady Chapel coincided with the introduction of Jesus Mass on Fridays and a Jesus antiphon on Lenten Fridays. A statue of Jesus was present from at least 1483, and in her will, one Dame Francisce Skulle of Greyfreres Strete asked to be buried before this image, next to her husband Sir Walter Skulle. The Skulles were clearly of the elite class that Eamon Duffy observes were particularly drawn to the new cult of the Holy Name of Jesus.⁹¹ In 1495–6 the antiphon was being sung at the statue of Blessed Mary in the chapel by the red door, but by the priorate of Thomas Myldenharn (1499–1507), a Jesus altar had been dedicated, later to be replaced by one made in white stone.⁹² This seems most likely to have been in the chapel still known as the Jesus Chapel, opening off the north aisle of the nave (Fig. 16). The altar there had previously been known as Bishop Cobham's, as he had endowed it in the hope of it becoming his chantry.⁹³ Later, Prior William More may have hoped it would be his; he gave candlesticks for the altar, a mass book, and a 'beryles stone' for him to be buried under before the altar.⁹⁴ He was thwarted though, as by the time of his death in 1552 the priory no longer existed.

Daniel Boys was employed to oversee both the music of the Lady Chapel and that of the Jesus Chapel, and services in both would be led by the same chaplain, singing-boys, and clerks, so that the two were run in tandem. This explains how the daily liturgy was performed with access to the Jesus Chapel only possible via the Lady Chapel, as services would never be held concurrently in both.

The Marian Salve Service

The first mention at Worcester of what is now known as the votive antiphon, sung at the Marian *Salve* service, was in 1465–6, when the sacrist paid the clerks 3s 4d for singing the *Salve* around the statue of the Virgin during Lent.⁹⁵ The ceremony must have taken place since at least the first half of the fourteenth century though, as the General Benedictine Chapter had ruled in 1343 it should be celebrated daily, and at Westminster it had been customary

⁹¹ PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/7/103, proved 30 July 1483; Duffy (2005), pp. 115–16.

⁹² C105 Cellarer's Roll, 1495–6; Myldenharn's Chantry, A6ii, fol. 25v; Wilson (1907), p. 40; C430 Sacrist's Roll, 1522–3; MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246.

⁹³ C425 Sacrist's Account Roll, 1423–4; Hamilton (1910), p. 65.

⁹⁴ A12, fols 3–4r; A11 Journal of Prior More, fol. 82r.

⁹⁵ C498 Sacrist's Accounts, 1465–6.

since around 1260.⁹⁶ The antiphon was to be sung at length, together and devoutly (*tractim, pariter et devote*) in the quire after Compline. At Worcester, as in some other churches, it was sung in the Lady Chapel after Vespers.⁹⁷ The earlier settings were in plainsong, but John Hampton's single surviving composition happens to be a polyphonic *Salve Regina* setting, no doubt written at Worcester for this service (Fig. 17). Lasting some fifteen minutes, it fulfils the requirement of length and is a remarkable five-part setting with a trope of four verses for soloists, one before each of the exclamations *O clemens*, *O pia*, *O mitis* and *O dulcis Maria*.⁹⁸

The musical score consists of five staves, each representing a different voice part: Treble, Meane, Tenor, Contratenor, and Bass. The music is set in common time with a key signature of one flat. The vocal parts sing Latin text, and the score shows complex rhythmic interplay between the voices.

Treble: Starts with a long note followed by a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "E - ia er-go".

Meane: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "E - ia er - go, ad-vo-ca - ta no -".

Tenor: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "E - ia er - go, ad-vo-ca - ta no -".

Contratenor: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "E - ia er - go, ad-vo-ca - ta no -".

Bass: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "E - ia er - go, ad-vo-ca - ta no -".

Second System:

Treble: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "il - los tu - os mi-se-ri-cor - des o-cu - los".

Meane: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "il - los tu - os mi-se-ri-cor - des o-cu - los ad nos".

Tenor: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "ad-vo-ca - ta no - stra, il - los tu - os o-cu - los ad nos".

Contratenor: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "ad-vo-ca - ta no - stra, il - los tu - os o-cu - los ad nos".

Bass: Starts with a eighth-note pattern. The lyrics are "ad-vo-ca - ta no - stra, il - los tu - os mi - se - ri - cor - des o-cu - los ad nos".

Fig. 17 A short extract from Hampton's *Salve Regina* showing some of the complex rhythmic interplay between parts (quoted from transcript in B1.41)

96 Pantin (1931–7), vol. 2, p. 33; Thompson (1902–4), vol. 2, p. 201.

97 See 1486 deed of appointment of John Hampton above.

98 Eton College MS 178.

Carols between Christmas and Epiphany

The sacrist's accounts between 1505 and 1508 mention an additional payment to Hampton at the vigil of Epiphany for singing carols with the boys. F L Harrison suggested that an English sacred carol could take the place of the versicle *Benedicamus domino* [Let us bless the Lord] and its response *Deo gratia* [Thanks be to God] at the end of each of the Office Hours during the season from Christmas to Epiphany,⁹⁹ and it is possible that these payments were for such a duty.

Organs in the Priory

The organs are mentioned at the time of their destruction during the reign of Edward VI. A great pair of organs, perhaps in the quire, was taken down on August 30th 1552, and two years before, organs in St Edmund's and St George's chapels had been dismantled as well.¹⁰⁰ An organ in the nave Lady Chapel was not mentioned at this time, but the accounts of the master of the chapel refer to buying, repairing and selling organs at various times in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so three of the nave chapels had their own organs. Their liturgical use is not known. An early tradition of playing the plainsong in single notes may have persisted, especially in these small chapels, but it is thought that the organ was used to substitute or supplement the plainsong and not to accompany it.¹⁰¹ The technique of improvising discant on a plainsong was familiar, and from 1522 Daniel Boys taught the technique on the organ to those singing-boys who wanted to learn. The music he played in the quire was probably more adventurous, and some idea of the part the organ played there can be gained from an *alternatim* setting of the Proper of the Mass by Thomas Preston. This is found in the earliest surviving manuscript of liturgical organ music, which was later owned at Worcester by Thomas Tomkins.¹⁰² Preston set the Introit for Easter Day, *Resurrexi et adhuc tecum sum, alleluia* [I am risen and am always with you, alleluia], the polyphonic

⁹⁹ C427 Sacrist's Roll, 1505–6; C428 Sacrist's Roll, 1507–8; see Harrison (1963), p. 124 and pp. 416–17, and Harrison (1965).

¹⁰⁰ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), pp. 246–7.

¹⁰¹ Harrison (1963), p. 214.

¹⁰² GB-Lbl MS Add 29996; Stevens (1958).

organ setting alternating with the plainsong sung by the community, with the words of the organ sections omitted.

INTROIT

Cantaria: I have risen **Organ (2 part setting)**: [and am still with you, alleluia. You have placed your hand upon me, alleluia. Your knowledge is become wonderful, alleluia]

VERSE

Cantaria: Lord you have searched me and known me **Organ (3 part setting)**: [You know my sitting down and my rising up]

INTROIT

Cantaria: I have risen **Convent**: and am still with you [...]

GLORIA PATRI

Cantaria: Glory to the father [...] **Convent**: as it was in the beginning [...]

INTROIT

Cantaria: I have risen **Organ (4 part setting)**: [and am still with you ...]

The organ setting increases from two parts to three and then four. The plainsong of the Introit and the psalm tone appear in the bass of the two-part setting, the middle voice of the three-part setting, and in the tenor of the four-part conclusion.

* * *

In the centuries following their ‘golden years’, the monasteries found new ways to compensate for losing their former pre-eminence.¹⁰³ The Benedictines became more outward-looking, and the work of the nave Lady Chapel was one way in which they could reach out to the laity. As the time of the Dissolution approached, the singing of the Lady Chapel choir showed no signs of tailing off, and during the mid-1530s its progress seems to support the belief of Eamon Duffy and others that monasteries remained vibrant and thriving centres of religious life at this time.¹⁰⁴ The choir was still a small one but capable of singing complex music like Hampton’s *Salve Regina*, and that was just one item in a large music library, to which compositions continued to be added in the 1530s as late as records exist. The choir survived for two years after the Dissolution and its music library for ten; then both disappeared with only a few written records to show they had ever existed. The next chapter will explore how this happened.

103 Heale (2009), pp. 1, 6, 30.

104 Duffy (2005), p. 4.

3. The Reformation and Changes under Four Tudor Monarchs (1520–1600)

The sixteenth-century reforms at Worcester Cathedral were vigorous and no doubt intended to be exemplary, as two of the leading activists of the time, Hugh Latimer and John Hooper, were assigned as Worcester bishops. The cathedral became significant not only because of the presence of these radical reformers, but also on account of its position in the Severn valley. It was at the centre of a busy river and cloth-making trade, and thriving city markets were crowded with visitors from the surrounding towns and villages. The roads and the river bridge also made the city important for travellers, and Worcester Cathedral was well-placed to become a valuable ‘showcase’ for the religious changes.

King Henry VIII

The story of these changes can be said to have started in the 1520s. These were years of unrest at the priory. Cardinal Wolsey had arranged a visitation there in 1525, having been told that the monks ‘lead a life less honest both in conduct and in morals than it befits such men’.¹ He deputed his chaplain John Alen to visit, and although none of Wolsey’s injunctions refers to dishonesty, one does criticise the singing, ruling:

that the monks apply themselves, every one of them, with more diligence to the divine Offices, especially the night ones; that they sing the psalms slowly, devoutly, with pauses, and with the responsories at full length; and that they sing conscientiously, on pain of divine retribution.²

¹ Wilson (1925b), p. 88.

² Wilson (1925b), p. 91.

The implication seems to be that monks were hurrying through Matins and Lauds carelessly, with the intention of returning to bed as soon as possible. The prior, William More, had been in office since 1518. He lived in an extravagant style and ruled over a fractured and unsettled convent, preferring to spend most of his time away from the monastery at his manors of Battenhall, Crowle, and Grimley. The work of the Chapel of Blessed Mary and the Jesus Chapel, however, continued unabated with the small professional choir. There were still two paid adults, Daniel Boys and John Clerke, and the number of boys seems to have remained at eight, as annual payments for hose, shoes, and woollen cloth for their livery remained constant for ten years until the last surviving account rolls of 1532.³

In 1529 a chronicle written by a Worcester citizen records the first portent of the iconoclasm that was to follow over the next decades and hints at a rise of Protestant feeling locally: 'This year the crosse before the yeld hall dore called the hyghe crosse and manie other crosses were defaced'.⁴ The yeld hall was the guildhall, and such damage was regarded seriously. Denial of crosses and cross-worship lay at the heart of the Lollard attack on images, and the general pardon issued by the Reformation Parliament of that year specifically excluded those who pulled down crosses in highways.⁵

At the end of March 1534, an act of Parliament required all Henry VIII's subjects to swear the Oath to the Succession, on pain of the death penalty for treason. Henry's argument was that with Catherine of Aragon having 'carnally known' his brother Arthur, his own marriage to her was against God's law.⁶ Mary was therefore illegitimate, and his marriage to Anne Boleyn was valid. The text of the oath taken by the Worcester monks in English has survived and, although undated, was probably sworn by the convent in the spring.⁷ It accepts the validity of the marriage to Anne and swears obedience to the king and his progeny by her. Later versions of the oath, administered elsewhere, included an acceptance of the abolition of the pope's authority and an agreement

³ A17 Accounts (1522, 1523, 1524); C413 (1524); C414 (1525); C414a (1530); and C414b (1532).

⁴ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 242.

⁵ 21 Henry VIII, c. 1; Lehmburg (1970), p. 91.

⁶ 25 Henry VIII, c. 22; Leviticus 20:21.

⁷ A6ii Register, fol. 183r.

to Henry's supremacy, both of which were to be stated again in the Act of Supremacy of November that year. By then, the forty-one Worcester monks had been called on to accept these terms by adding their signatures to a document that still survives in the National Archives.⁸

Thomas Cromwell's visitation of the priory on behalf of the king the following year was notable mainly for the claims and counterclaims of sparring monks, but afterwards changes started to multiply.⁹ The controversial and radical Hugh Latimer was consecrated bishop in succession to an Italian absentee in September 1535, and Prior William More resigned the following February or March, with his opponent, Roger Neckham, filling his place while an election was held. The process was flawed and the result predetermined, but Henry Holbeche accepted the nomination in March 1536. Then in May, Anne Boleyn was executed, putting the whole question of the royal succession into confusion, and the next month, with papal supremacy ended, Latimer opened the Convocation of the Clergy, which aimed to discuss how to take matters forward.

Latimer presented a manifesto that was altogether too uncompromising to be accepted by Convocation, but it did indicate some of the 'abuses' that Worcester's new bishop wanted abolished: the fiction of purgatory that was a pick-pocket extorting money for Masses and indulgences; images that were clad in silk and jewels when the money could ease the suffering of the poor; lights that were burnt before these images even at noon; an excess of holy days that hindered industry and deprived the poor of food; long pilgrimages to particular images when there was no reason to prefer one image above another; and relics that were often fraudulent, with people being misled with stories of false miracles.¹⁰ The Ten Articles of belief that emerged sidestepped most of these issues, maintaining the old traditions but altering their significance and interpretation. Images represented the 'virtue and good example' of saints; they could remain, but censing, kneeling and offering them supplication could not. Prayers and Masses for the dead were to be allowed, though the name purgatory was rejected, as was the idea that Masses could deliver people from their pain and send them

⁸ A6ii, fol. 182v; GB-Lna E25/122/3, p. 279.

⁹ *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 9, preface, pp. xxi–xxii.

¹⁰ Corrie (1844), pp. 33–58, Sermons to Convocation.

straight to heaven. All of the decisions were compromises, but in a way this foreshadowed the manner of change by trade-off that characterised the rest of Henry's reign.

The Convocation was, however, more radical about holy days. For the reasons Latimer had advanced, when these occurred on weekdays in harvest time or during the Westminster law terms they were not to be treated as festivals.¹¹ There were a few exceptions, but otherwise, although priests could still hold services at these times, they were not to be celebrated as 'hygh holydayes'. The new rules took effect in mid-September, and the Worcester monks looking through their crowded calendar over the coming months would have found a substantial number of their festivals gone. The loss would have been most marked when the festivals were higher-ranking ones: Matins would be shortened from three nocturns to two short ones, polyphony would be excluded, and embellishments to the plainsong omitted. When there would normally have been processions to the saints' altars after Lauds and Vespers, these would cease, and the festal use of bells, vestments and lights would also stop. For men who had lived with these traditions since their profession as monks, these were radical changes that diminished the liturgy and were no doubt quite disturbing.

Of the forty-eight festival days between mid-September and Advent Sunday that year, thirty-one were abrogated.¹² Six of these would have been ranked *in capis*, the third grade of importance to the priory, and eight were for saints who had their own altar or chapel, whose feasts would formerly have been celebrated with processions to these. In the longer term, unless they occurred on Sundays, the newer feasts of the Transfiguration and *In nomine Jesu*, which both fell in harvest time, would go, as would the festivals of the Holy Relics and the Translation of St Benedict. The Translation of St Wulfstan could not be celebrated as a festival if it fell on a weekday during the Trinity law term, and the busiest time for feasts was to become the two months around Christmas, with a similar period (or sometimes longer, depending on its timing), around Easter.

11 Wilkins (1737), p. 823 (Harvest time: July 1st to September 29th; Westminster term dates are given in this Act).

12 These figures have to be speculative, but are based on the two early thirteenth-century Calendars (in F160 and GB-Omc MS 100), taking into account likely later additions and substitutions (Hampson (1841), vol. 2, pp. 133–6).

Latimer hoped for significant alteration of the Mass too, but Henry made only minor changes, and it was still sung in Latin. The indulgences ('the byssshop of Rome's pardons') associated with some, such as the *missa in nomine Jesu* [Mass of the Name of Jesus] and the *missa in quinque vulneribus domini Jesu Christi*, [Mass of the Five Wounds of the Lord Jesus Christ] were now dismissed, but Henry's statement of doctrine, the King's Book of 1543, still held to a belief in transubstantiation.¹³ The name 'purgatory' was abandoned, but it was still good to pray for souls of the departed, and Henry ruled in the new Worcester statutes that obsequies and Masses were to be performed for him on the anniversary of his death for all time.¹⁴ It was hardly surprising with this ambivalence that his subjects would follow the old ways when writing their wills. In 1545 a layman, Roger Warde, asked to be buried in the cathedral churchyard, saying, 'I will that at my buriall there be xij priestes singinge for my father, my mother soules and for all christiens. Three to singe masse of the holye Trinitie, Three of the holye goost, Three of the Nativitie of Christ, and three of the fyve woundes of our Lorde'.¹⁵ Although the 'five wounds' Mass was linked with possible indulgences, this may not have been Warde's intention, as traditionally five celebrations of the Mass had been required for these to be granted.¹⁶

As well as a multitude of altars, the cathedral was filled with statues of saints. The best known of these was 'Our Lady of Worcester' in the Lady Chapel, a popular object of pilgrimage and offerings. Because of its size—ten feet high—and the number of visitors that thronged to it, it was probably in the retrochoir Lady Chapel, but the chapel in the nave also had an image of Mary, next to which a chaplain celebrated first Mass.¹⁷ A statue of St James the apostle 'before the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary' is mentioned in a will of 1466,¹⁸ three statues on the altar of St John the Baptist were made in 1521–2,¹⁹ and statues of 'Johannes and our lady' in the middle of the altar in St Cecilia's Chapel were gilded in

¹³ Henry VIII (1543).

¹⁴ Leach (1913), p. 142 and p. 129.

¹⁵ Roger Warde, PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/30/481, proved 2 July 1545.

¹⁶ Catholic Church (1868), appendix D.

¹⁷ Sacrist's Rolls: C426, 1501–2, and C430, 1523–4, see Chapter Two, section titled Re-Founding the Chapel and Choir by Bishop John Alcock.

¹⁸ Hugh Joly, PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/5/257, proved 29 October 1466.

¹⁹ C429 Sacrist's Roll, 1521–2.

1520.²⁰ There were many more. Most were allowed to remain, but there was to be an exception.

The statue of the Virgin in the Lady Chapel was a prime example of an image for ‘superstition or lucre’ and, because of this, was banned by a 1536 injunction of Thomas Cromwell. In the later Middle Ages, it had replaced the shrines as the main draw for pilgrims. The takings, which peaked in the early sixteenth century, came in various forms: donations left in a coffer near the image; income from sales of wax and candles; gifts of horses, oxen, cattle and sheep; and legacies.²¹ Having stripped it of its robe and jewels, an action which showed it to have ‘the similitude of a bishop, like a giant, almost 10ft. long’,²² Latimer was happy to follow Cromwell’s further injunction of 1538 to destroy it.²³ He believed that ‘our great Sibyll’ could be burnt with others in Smithfield, where it would ‘make a jolly muster’.

Thomas Becket’s shrine at Canterbury was taken down on September 8th 1538, and in the same year at Worcester, the shrines of St Oswald and St Wulfstan were dismantled. The saints’ bones were wrapped in lead and buried at the north end of the altar. The Worcester chronicler expressed the sense of shock in the city: ‘And att that tyme God sent suche lighteninge and thunder that all theraboutes thought the churche would fall on them’.²⁴

There is little doubt that Bishop Latimer would have driven reforms at Worcester faster and more radically had he not been hampered by the Convocation of Clergy, and in November 1538 by the king himself. In this month a Royal Proclamation encouraged the continuation of the old ceremonials like creeping to the cross on Good Friday, bearing candles at the Feast of the Purification, and using lights before the Holy Sacrament in the sepulchre at Easter.²⁵ This resurgence of traditionalism, and in particular the ‘Bill of Six Articles’, was a setback for the reformers. Latimer spoke out boldly against the Six Articles in the House of Lords and, as a result, was forced to resign his bishopric, and the more conservative John Bell was consecrated Bishop of Worcester in his place

20 Fegan (1913), vol. 1, p. 110.

21 C427 Sacrist’s Roll, 1505–6.

22 *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 14, part 2, p. 155, no. 402.

23 Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, pp. 34ff; Corrie (1845), p. 395.

24 MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 244.

25 Hughes and Larkin (1964), vol. 1, p. 270.

in August 1539. The following January a team of seven commissioners led by Robert Southwell arrived in Worcester with instructions to accept the surrender of the priory and to take note in writing of the qualities and life of each monk. On the basis of this, they were to decide who could immediately be dismissed with a pension and what value this pension should have, according to the individual's qualities.²⁶

A note in a cathedral ledger dates the Dissolution to January 16th 1539/40, and David Thornton has investigated the outcome for members of the priory.²⁷ Of about thirty-six monks at the time of the Dissolution, eleven were pensioned off between January and March 1540, with seven more in July, and two disappeared with unknown fate. This left sixteen to continue in the new secular 'Royal College' that Dr John Bell would lead as an interim arrangement until the new foundation was settled.

Services moved to a secular scheme, abandoning the Benedictine Use, and the commissioners' tasks were listed, with Archbishop Wriothesley's approval. They included a temporary stay of obsolescence for the Lady Chapel choir:

They shall charge the guardian [i.e., the former prior], by a day, to provide books 'after Sarum use', and surplices for the choir; and then to keep daily service in the church with our Lady's Mass, as used in the college of Windsor, going to Matins at 6am. They shall retain such 'reasonable number of' singing men, conductors and children as now.²⁸

The daily services at the College of St George in Windsor referred to here were largely still those established by Edward III in 1352, including the eight Office Hours and several Masses, with a daily celebration of Lady Mass before High Mass. Since the 1460s there had also been a daily Jesus antiphon, and a Marian 'votive antiphon' was sung after Compline.²⁹

Meanwhile, Henry took what assets he could. Four bells in the leaden steeple (the detached campanile) were taken down, broken and carried away, and 144oz of plate were removed.³⁰ One agent of Henry's Court

²⁶ *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 15, p. 27, no. 81; GB-Lna E315/245 fol.8r.; *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 14, part 1, 30 June 1539, p. 530.

²⁷ A12 Miscellaneous volume, fol. 170v; Thornton (2018).

²⁸ Quoted from *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 14, part 1, 30 June 1539, p. 530; full text: GB-Lna E36/116, pp. 3–20.

²⁹ Bowers (2001), pp. 172, 194, 202–3.

³⁰ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 248.

of Augmentations wrote to another that he had also taken twelve copies: ten of green velvet, one of gold embroidery and one of embroidered red velvet. The agent considered these 'corse and base thynges' and the dean had pressed him to ask Cromwell to restore them to the cathedral so that they could continue to be used.³¹ Whether the vestments were returned is uncertain, but within a few years they were to be consigned to history anyway.³²

The slowing of evangelical change had significant benefits for cathedral choirs, the form of which was to be established over the next few years. John Bell was one of six bishops appointed by Henry VIII the following year to revise ceremonial aspects of the Church. Only two of the six were from the evangelical wing of the Church, and the text they produced supported the use of music. It spoke of the 'swete armonye' of singers and organs, which stirred the people, 'bothe to excite them to prayers and devocion and also to putt theym in remembraunce of the hevenlie triumphante churche'. An earlier draft had referred to music stirring the people to 'godes worde there songe and not vnderstan[d] id'.³³ Dana Marsh finds a parallel here with the interpretation of a *jubilus* by St Augustine of Hippo.³⁴ Music could help the untutored layman who struggled to comprehend Holy Scripture, but it could also inspire those striving for insights beyond human understanding. The latter was essentially the medieval concept of anagogy, which may have lost some credence with the reformers because of its association with Catholic theologians. The project in any case was not completed.

The new foundation was established at Worcester on January 24th 1541/2, and the first-appointed prebendaries were named in a letter patent.³⁵ The scheme was devised by the traditionalist bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, who produced a list of the new roles: a dean, ten prebendaries, ten peticanons, eight lay clerks, a gospeller, an epistoller, and twelve choristers with a master.³⁶ Cranmer had objected to

31 Wright (1843), p. 284, no. CXXXVIII.

32 The 1552 prayer book specified surplices only, or a rochet for the bishop.

33 Marsh (2007), pp. 207–8.

34 On Augustine, see Chapter One, section titled Embellishments of the Chant at Worcester.

35 *Letters and Papers* (1862–1910), vol. 17, p. 30; Add MS 86 Dotation Charter, 24 January 1541[/2], 33 Henry VIII.

36 Leach (1913), p. 117; GB-Lna E315/24.

a similar scheme for Canterbury on the grounds that it wasted money on prebendaries, who in his experience ‘spent their time in much idleness, and their substance in superfluous belly cheer’, but his objection was ignored.³⁷ The sixteen monks serving in the transitional Royal College of Worcester found positions in the new foundation as four prebendaries, ten minor canons, an epistoller and a gospeller. This meant that nearly half of the monks serving at the time of the Dissolution eventually found employment in the secular cathedral, and their names appear in the first surviving set of accounts of 1543–4.³⁸

An act was passed in 1543 confirming that only the Sarum Breviary was to be used, and statutes were issued the next year for the cathedrals of the New Foundation.³⁹ One of the compilers of the statutes, Nicholas Heath, was shortly to be elected Bishop of Worcester. The most significant change in the staffing from Bishop Gardiner’s scheme was a reduction in the number of choristers from twelve to ten. Divine service was to take place ‘after the fashion and rites of other cathedral churches’,⁴⁰ and the injunctions issued for Rochester Cathedral by Bishop Heath shortly before his translation to Worcester give some details of these.⁴¹ Singing-boys had a significant role, singing Lady Mass and a votive antiphon throughout the week, with clerks and monks only joining them for holydays. The boys would also sing with the men at first Vespers on the eve of more important festivals. Jesus Mass continued, and the cult of Jesus remained very popular.⁴² The new statutes also altered the bishop’s role; he no longer had any part in the daily operation of the cathedral but held a visitation every three years, and appointment of the dean and canons was vested in the monarch.

Overall, at the time of Henry’s death, despite the break with Rome, the Dissolution of the Priory, and the destruction of the shrines and image of the Virgin, the most significant change for the liturgy and music was the loss of many weekday festivals. The Mass was still celebrated in Latin many times each day, and in addition there were daily Lady Mass, Jesus Mass on Fridays, and obits of founders and benefactors on their

37 Jenkyns (1833), vol. 1, p. 292. Cranmer to Cromwell, 29 November 1539.

38 A203 Treasurer’s Book.

39 Wilkins (1737), vol. 3, pp. 861–2.

40 Leach (1913), pp. 128, 141.

41 Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, pp. 95ff; Atkins (1918), pp. 20–1.

42 New (1999), pp. 43, 78.

anniversaries. The Office of the Day continued with some alteration in its timing, and the old rituals, such as those involving holy bread, holy water, creeping to the cross, the Easter sepulchre, and the use of candles at Candlemas, were still allowed, but now only 'to put us in remembrance of things of higher perfection'⁴³ and with the warning that no trust of salvation should be put in them.

King Edward VI

On Henry's death, and by his arrangement, a number of evangelical politicians were in a strong position to take over the regency on behalf of the nine-year-old Edward VI. Edward Seymour, First Duke of Somerset, was recognised as Lord Protector, and he was surrounded by like-minded men in the Privy Council. The stage was set for a reforming assault on the Church.

It started with a series of royal injunctions in July 1547, only six months after Henry's death.⁴⁴ Images abused as idols by censing or offerings made to them were to be taken down and destroyed. A 'great brasen candelstike and the beame of timber before the highe altar' were removed that year,⁴⁵ although images on the high altar were allowed to stay until a royal visitation the following January.⁴⁶ No candles or torches were to be permitted apart from two on the high altar. Up to this time, the funeral arrangement proposed by a Worcester citizen in 1545 illustrates what had been a favourite place for candles. Lights before images had been banned fifteen years before and rood lofts then became the preferred alternative. The citizen asked for five tapers to be burnt around his hearse and then moved to the cathedral until the 'month's mind'—a Requiem Mass held about a month after death. After that he intended them to burn in the cathedral's rood loft, thus, incidentally, confirming that there was an accessible loft and not merely a rood beam.⁴⁷ Now even candles there were banned.

The proclamation changed the liturgy and music also. Epistle, Gospel,

⁴³ Hughes and Larkin (1964), vol. 1, p. 274.

⁴⁴ Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, pp. 114–30.

⁴⁵ Engel (2007), p. 184, suggests the beam was tied between the west piers of the Eastern crossing.

⁴⁶ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 245.

⁴⁷ Roger Warde, PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/30/481, proved 2 July 1545.

and lessons were to be in English, all processions were forbidden, and the 1544 English Litany (including the petition asking to be delivered ‘from all sedycion and privey conspiracie, from the tyranny of the bisshop of Rome and all his detestable enormyties’)⁴⁸ was to be sung from the middle of the quire.

The denial of the concept of purgatory meant chantries had less purpose. They were dissolved by an act of Parliament in December 1547,⁴⁹ and the changes were followed up by a visitation that reached Worcester in January. Five commissioners attended the cathedral including Richard Morison, a prebendary at Salisbury Cathedral; Robert Ferrar, who served as a preacher; and George Constantine, also a cleric, who was registrar.⁵⁰ George Constantine had had previous experience of the dean, John Barlow, and it was not happy. Eight years before, Constantine had been the victim of what Tim Treml has called Barlow’s ‘most outrageous betrayal’, when he accused Constantine of treason to Thomas Cromwell. Having been arrested in Wales, George Constantine spent harrowing weeks or months in the Tower of London, probably only escaping a death sentence by the downfall of Cromwell himself. Meeting Barlow again can only have been chilling.⁵¹ Staying at Worcester, the Dean and Chapter paid £22 10s 9d ‘for the expense of the Commissioners and their servants and their masters of record-keeping for the space of seven days’.⁵²

The visitation has become notorious for the widespread national mutilation of church images, a devastation that Diarmaid MacCulloch has called the ‘visitation holocaust’.⁵³ The Worcester citizen, John Rowland, alias Steynor, commented, ‘And 10 Januarii [1548] was taken downe all the Images in the highe Alter, and in all the churche were destroied and not only there, but also in all other churches’.⁵⁴ By the time of the commissioners’ arrival at Worcester, the visitations had been progressing for four months, and it had been found that ‘almost in every place is contention for Images, whether they have been abused

⁴⁸ See http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Litany1544/Litany_1544.htm

⁴⁹ 1 Edward VI, c. 14.

⁵⁰ Strype (1812), vol. 1, p. 209.

⁵¹ Treml (2018), pp. 13–17.

⁵² A205 Treasurer’s Book 1547–8.

⁵³ MacCulloch (2002), p. 73.

⁵⁴ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 245.

or not'.⁵⁵ For this reason, the month after their attendance at Worcester, the remit was expanded to require all images to be removed. But with the original injunctions open to some leeway in their interpretation, even without this added licence, the commissioners may have been ready for some radical destruction. It is unfortunate that it has not been possible to assign a date to any Worcester iconoclasm with certainty.



Fig. 18 Smashed statuette of the Coronation of the Virgin. Found in the west wall of the tower of St Michael's Church when it was demolished in 1839, it may have come from the cathedral or St Michael's Church (image from Worcestershire Museum collection, with permission, all rights reserved)⁵⁶

55 Burnet (1820), no. XXIII, book 1, part 2 (vol. 4, p. 181).

56 WJ, 30 September 1854.

Royal injunctions were written in London, and a lengthy list was administered by the royal visitors. The move from the monastic cursus to the Use of Sarum at the Dissolution had reduced the twelve lessons and twelve responsories at Sunday Matins to nine of each, and in a further injunction this was now reduced to six. Also, any responsory or memorial used at Evensong was to be left out. When there was a sermon or homily, the lesser hours (Prime, Terce, Sext, None, and Compline) were to be omitted, a ruling that would have affected every Sunday.⁵⁷ With the visitation over, Dean Barlow started implementing the sweeping changes in ritual and ceremony demanded by Protector Somerset's government. He was a single-minded man who probably had little interest in the music. A description from the early 1530s calls him 'short, red haired, very moderate in eating and drinking, and silent unless addressed, saying, among other things, when there was a question of pleasure or pastime, that he knew neither music nor games of chance'.⁵⁸

Cranmer had arranged for bishops to be notified of further changes in January 1548, and they were to start immediately.⁵⁹ At Candlemas the Mass was to begin without ceremony. By the Use of Sarum, there would previously have been a blessing and distribution of candles, with the antiphon *Lumen ad revelationem gentium* [A light to lighten the Gentiles], and a procession, probably around the cloister to the rood.⁶⁰ For Ash Wednesday the blessing and imposition of ashes were stopped, and the elaborate double procession of Palm Sunday also disappeared. Making palm crosses during the singing of the passion narrative was banned; it was a tradition described with heavy satire by a polemicist as follows:

This solempne syre [one of the clergy], played Christes part, a gods name. Then another companye of singers, chyldren and al, song in priksong, the Iewes part. And the deuill (the deacon I should haue said) read the middel [evangelist's] text. [the priest at the altar] in the meane time, because it was teadiouse to be vnoccupyed [...] made crosses of palme, to set vpon your dorss, & to beare in your purses, to chace awai the diuel⁶¹

⁵⁷ Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, p. 114, injunctions 21, 36.

⁵⁸ Calendar of State Papers, Spain, vol. 4, part 2, 1531–3, HMSO London 1882, Item 976, 25 June 1532. This reference and much more information about Barlow is from Tremel (2018), p. 7.

⁵⁹ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), pp. 245ff.

⁶⁰ *Processionale ad usus insignis ecclesie Sarum* (1532).

⁶¹ Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, p. 126; Anonymous (1554); in 1435–6, a horseman

Veneration of the Cross ('creeping to the cross') on Good Friday and the blessing of new fire on Holy Saturday were both banished, but hallowing of the paschal candle and the font continued for another year at Worcester. For Easter Day the chronicle reports, 'On Easter Day att the resurrection was taken out of the sepulchre the pix with the sacrament, they synginge X'P'S is risen without procession', implying that the antiphon *Christus resurgens* was now sung in English. There is no mention of the *tenebrae* services on the three days of the *Triduum*, the stripping and washing of altars, the washing of feet on Maundy Thursday, or other Holy Week ceremonial, but it can be assumed that these ceased too. In confirmation of this for the following year is the entry, 'And 23 April [1549] was masse, mattens, evensonge and all other devine service said and songe in Englishe, and all other devine service layd downe'.⁶² To support the changes, Thomas Cranmer's first *Book of Common Prayer* was brought out in the same year.

The scrapping of centuries-old liturgy was not wanton destruction. A number of these ceremonies had superstitious associations: candles could become votive offerings after the service and 'palms' could be stored as charms, and these were significant issues for the reformers. There were more general concerns with ceremonial too. Taking part in a familiar and traditional ritual could give reassurance and comfort to those taking part, but often without much consideration for its significance. A parallel existed with theatrical performances in which a player acted a role without needing to share the character's beliefs.⁶³ Also, the ceremony was tainted. John Hooper, soon to be Bishop of Worcester, believed that 'a thing in itself indifferent, but having been abused to Superstitious purposes, could never after be lookt upon as indifferent and innocent'.⁶⁴ He strongly supported abrogation of 'things that man's constitutions attribute any holiness unto, as bewitched water, candles, boughs, or any such ethnic superstition: for only Christ sanctifieth, and all holiness we must attribute unto him'.⁶⁵ 'Bewitched water' had been used at Worcester for many years in the form of a holy

had ridden to Pershore Abbey for a setting of the Passion, possibly a polyphonic one as in this description (C279a, 1435–6).

62 MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246.

63 Streete (2009), p. 138.

64 Johnson (1688), p. 3.

65 Carr (1843), p. 73.

water stoup, perhaps near the north door, close to which a citizen had asked to be buried in 1520.⁶⁶

On Christmas Day a Royal Proclamation ordered that all service books should be delivered to the bishops, who were to destroy or deface them.⁶⁷ John Rowland described the event at Worcester: ‘This year all bookes of devine service brought to the bisshopp of the sea: videlicet liggers, masse-booke, Grailes, pies, portuasses, legendes, and all thees and many others were burnte’.⁶⁸ Bishop Heath, despite his conservative leanings, seems to have done the job efficiently. Only one volume, the *Worcester Antiphoner*, remains. There is a clue to how it survived: the words *Rogerus Batenall est possessor huius librij* [Roger Batenall is the owner of this book] are written in the top margin of one page.⁶⁹ Roger Batenall had been a monk at Worcester since 1521 or earlier but was forced to retire in January 1540. In the words of the commissioners he was one of eleven ‘divers superfluous persons late religious [...] now despatched out of the [church]’.⁷⁰ It is most unlikely that Batenall while still a monk would have claimed ownership of an important volume that had been treasured by the priory for centuries, but more probable that he removed it at the Dissolution and added the annotation later. By that time it would have become largely obsolete because of the introduction of the Sarum Use. His note, buried as it is on a page in the middle of the volume, gives the appearance of an idle thought rather than an assertive claim of ownership to a finder.

In February 1550, Bishop Heath appeared before the Privy Council and was committed to the Fleet Prison for refusing to subscribe to the new Ordinal, which accompanied the newly-issued *Book of Common Prayer*.⁷¹ Worcester was to be without a bishop for over two years, but there was no slacking in the pace of reform. Without any specific government directive, Dean Barlow cleared the nave of chapels and altars and removed the organs there. The nave was to become functionless until the last decade of the century.

⁶⁶ Agnes Lane PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/20/40, proved 3 December 1520.

⁶⁷ Hughes and Larkin (1964), vol. 2, pp. 485ff.

⁶⁸ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 246. Liggers (or ledgers) were breviaries, grails were graduals, pies were ordinals, portuasses (or porteous) were portiforia or portable breviaries, and legends were lectionaries.

⁶⁹ F160, fol. 133r.

⁷⁰ Greatrex (1997), p. 794; Thornton (2018), p. 11.

⁷¹ Dasent et al. (1890–1964), vol. 2 (1547–1550), pp. 388, 403.

Amidst the destruction there were some creative moves. The Worcester chronicler implied, by calling it the king's command, that the cathedral had a 'longe table of tree, and therupon to say masse in Englishe and to minister the Communion to the people in English'. The altar at Worcester Cathedral was not demolished until August 12th 1551, when it was 'taken downe to the grownd',⁷² but meanwhile it is very likely that a 'long table of tree' was installed. It would have gone to the west of King John's tomb since that was, as now, close to the altar steps, and it would have been aligned east-west.⁷³ The 1552 prayer book required it to be covered with 'faire white linnen cloth', and the priest was to stand on its north side for Communion. The chronicler added that the people were 'to stand for theyr howsell', an Old English term for the consecrated elements of Eucharist. The requirement to stand reflected the belief that kneeling to receive Communion could symbolise a recognition of the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. This was a suspicion shared by John Hooper,⁷⁴ although he preferred sitting to standing. More significantly, the instruction applied to the whole congregation. The *Order of Communion* of 1548,⁷⁵ issued some fifteen months before the first *Book of Common Prayer*, for the first time granted royal assent to the Holy Sacrament being delivered to the whole congregation in both kinds. Prior to this, lay people would only receive Communion once a year, usually around Easter, and then as bread alone.

In May 1552, John Hooper was nominated Bishop of Worcester *in commendam* with Gloucester. Hooper had spent ten years in exile, latterly at Zurich, to avoid persecution for his extreme reforming beliefs and had only been in England for three years. He was dissatisfied even with the rapid advance of change and wrote to the Swiss reformer, Heinrich Bullinger, of his objections to vestments, altar candles, and to Mass-priests using the same tone and manner of chanting as they had done in Catholic Masses.⁷⁶ He was also very unhappy with the timid changes of the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*, and threatened not to administer the Lord's Supper until they were amended. If anything,

⁷² MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 247.

⁷³ Engel (2007), pp. 208, 127.

⁷⁴ Carr (1843), p. 536.

⁷⁵ Wilson (1908).

⁷⁶ Robinson (1846–7), vol. 1, pp. 48, 78.

the rate of change at Worcester escalated under Hooper, with the Communion service receiving particular attention. He ruled that this was not to be celebrated in the place that Mass had been sung; that elevation of the Sacrament and ringing of the sacring bell should cease; and that no lights were to be placed on the Lord's board. In particular, any manner of 'counterfeiting of the popish Mass' was abhorrent and strictly forbidden.⁷⁷

August 1552 saw dramatic changes to the quire. They may have been even more seismic than the 'visitation holocaust': 'all the Quire with the busshopes stall was taken downe to the stalles, and the great payr of organs were taken downe 30 August'.⁷⁸ Two prebendaries with conservative beliefs, Hugh Joliffe and Robert Johnson, baulked at this as they did at many of Bishop Hooper's edicts and complained to the Privy Council. Hooper defended himself, writing to Sir William Cecil, a royal minister:

I suppose ye had hard that there shuld be a great spoyle made of this church hyre. For what can be so wel donne that men of light conscience cannot make, by suggestion, to appere ivel? Doutles the things donne be no more then the express words of the Kings Majesties Injunctions, commandyd to be donne. And I darre saye, there is not for a Churche to preach Goddes word in, and to mynster his holy Sacraments, more godly within this realm. But, Mr Secretarie, I see mouche myschefe in mens hertes⁷⁹

Not surprisingly, the Privy Council supported Bishop Hooper rather than the canons, although in reality there had been no royal instruction to demolish quire furnishings or organs.

The death of Edward VI with a pulmonary infection, probably tuberculosis, at the age of fifteen on July 6th 1553, brought a time of accelerated change towards Protestantism to an end. Despite Cranmer's remarkable creation of the first *Book of Common Prayer* and the idealism of its proponents, the most conspicuous changes brought about in Worcester must have been the relentless dismantling of centuries-old ceremonial and the destruction of church furnishings. Worcester bishops had included the two leading evangelical preachers of their time, Hugh

⁷⁷ Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, pp. 267ff.

⁷⁸ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 247.

⁷⁹ Strype (1812), vol.2, p. 873.

Latimer and John Hooper, but whether many of the cathedral canons supported their views is questionable. John Harley and John Standish were known to be evangelical, but Roger Neckham and possibly John Compton were former monks, and the degree to which they embraced the religious changes is not known.⁸⁰ Only Joliffe and Johnson were willing to contest the new beliefs at the time, but Gilbert Bourne, the fifth prebendary, was keen to denounce them after Edward's death, having previously kept such thoughts to himself.⁸¹ The prebendary Richard Ever, along with Hugh Joliffe, failed to support a child accused of Protestant beliefs in a notorious case of maltreatment at the Worcester Guildhall, thus hinting that he also had reservations.⁸² In an age when heretics were treated harshly many seemed happier to keep their heads below the parapet than to speak out.

Queen Mary

Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen four days after Edward's death but was deposed nine days later, and Mary rode triumphantly into London on August 3rd with widespread support. It was well known that Mary wanted a move back to the Catholic liturgy, and at Worcester, Bishop Hooper and Dean Barlow, both radical evangelicals, were early targets of the new regime. Hooper appeared before the Privy Council at Richmond on August 29th and was sent to the Fleet Prison,⁸³ and meanwhile Nicholas Heath was recognised as Bishop of Worcester only three days after Mary's entry into London.⁸⁴ Barlow was deprived in the following months but not replaced until April the following year, and then by Philip Hawford, who was in fact a surprising choice. He was a man of uncertain loyalties, having served as a monk at Evesham, where he bought preferment from Thomas Cromwell and then curried favour with him by assisting his programme of closures of religious foundations. Latimer had praised him to Cromwell as 'a verye cyvyll

⁸⁰ Roger Neckham was a former Worcester monk and John Compton, alias Theale, may have been the monk almoner at Pershore Abbey (Thornton (2021), p. 233, footnote 81).

⁸¹ Louisa (2008).

⁸² Nichols (1859), pp. 60ff.

⁸³ Ryle (1868), p. 36.

⁸⁴ Loades (2008).

and honeste man and won yt puttuth all hys truste yn your good lordshypp'.⁸⁵ Mary must have considered him sufficiently pliant to serve the new regime.

From December 21st services were required to be in Latin, and in the form they had been in the last year of Henry VIII's reign.⁸⁶ A Royal Proclamation demanded the reinstatement of altars and the distribution of holy water and holy bread on Sundays.⁸⁷ John Hooper, writing from the Fleet, believed that altars had already been set up throughout the kingdom by September. Utensils and ornaments for Mass and a new rood beam would have been required, and often a church's parishioners could help, having purchased them when they were formerly banned. At the neighbouring church of St Michael in Bedwardine a cross, a pair of censers, a chrismatory, tunakell for holy water, a pyx, and a ship for frankincense were restored to the church by one Master Blunte.⁸⁸ Similarly, at St Helen's, John Cotterell, in his will of 1556, left to the church 'tymber that I bought of the Roodloft in the same churche wythe all that belongeth there unto'.⁸⁹ At the Cathedral, John Bourne, a prominent local Catholic, and the former prior, William More, may have been in a position to help, as both had from the priory 'dyvers parcelles off stufte' at the time of the Dissolution in 1540.⁹⁰

Mary aimed to restore the beauty and order of Catholic worship. The quire was re-furnished in 1556: the old stalls were moved back from the 'clocke howse' (the leaden steeple or clochium); higher and lower seats were created for clergy and children respectively; the quire was closed in with 'carved boordes'; and there was a pulpitum (a 'goodly lofte') for reading the gospel.⁹¹ Reaching to the high altar were stone screens, 'grated with iron'—perhaps referring to the doorways on north and south. They survived until the nineteenth century, when they were described as 'of very elegant designs, crowned with a beautiful embattled line of open work quatrefoils'.⁹²

⁸⁵ Clark (2015).

⁸⁶ First Act of Repeal, October 1553, 1 Mary I, session 2, chapter 2.

⁸⁷ Hughes and Larkin (1964), vol. 2; Nichols (1848), p. 50.

⁸⁸ Amphlett (1896), pp. 29–30.

⁸⁹ GB-WOr John Cotterell will, 1556:75, proved 4 October 1556.

⁹⁰ Wright (1843), p. 284, letter CXXXVIII.

⁹¹ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 248.

⁹² *Gentleman's Magazine*, 82.1 (1812), 525. The screens are illustrated in Britton (1835).

The quire furniture, illustrated in 1823 by Charles Wild (Fig. 25), was removed at the Victorian restoration and only saved from destruction by being installed in Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield, where it still remains. In an erudite and detailed article, Nicholas Riall has shown on stylistic grounds that it dates from the time of Queen Mary, when apparently only the fourteenth-century stalls in the back row with their misericords were saved.⁹³ Two religious symbols that could only have come from a time of Roman Catholic worship are consistent with this dating: a cross with two scourges (which Valentine Green⁹⁴ records as being on the easternmost stall on the south) and the five wounds of Christ (which was on the opposite stall on the north). The more movable Marian stalls in front may have disappeared during the Interregnum, to be replaced in the 1660s, which explains why they are now of paler, less-aged oak.

An organ was built on the north side of the quire, and was later described by the cathedral steward, John Bourne, as 'one of the most solempne instruments of this realme', costing two hundred pounds.⁹⁵ If this figure was correct, and as cathedral steward Bourne should have known, it must have indeed been a magnificent instrument. An organ constructed on the pulpitum at Exeter Cathedral in 1513–14, which cost rather less at £164-5-7¼, has been described by Stephen Bicknell as 'the largest organ we know of in the British Isles before the Civil War'.⁹⁶

Articles issued by Mary in March 1554 altered the holydays to be observed, along with the ceremonies associated with them, to those kept in the last days of Henry VIII.⁹⁷ The feast of Corpus Christi was reinstated, and along with it the pageants. The Worcester council ruled that 'all companeis shale prepayre there shewes upon corpus chrysti daye as hathe bine of ould time accustomyd'. Some other occasions had been less than stately, and it was ordered that they should process 'in a decent order one aftur another as hereaftur shalbe apoyntid by the

⁹³ Riall (2019).

⁹⁴ Green (1796), vol. 1, pp. 135–6. Green does not hesitate to date these from Queen Mary's time, although until recently this has been disputed.

⁹⁵ GB-Lna State Papers 12/28/35 fol.125v, 'The dooinges of the deane and chapitre of Worcster'.

⁹⁶ Bicknell (1996), pp. 37ff.

⁹⁷ Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 2, pp. 322ff.

ballifes & not upon heapes as heretofore hath ben of late accustomyd'.⁹⁸

At the time of Mary's First Act of Repeal, Worcester was without a dean, but seven of the prebendaries would have remembered the Worcester services from the last year of Henry VIII's rule, which were now to be re-established. The Office returned to the Use of Sarum, with Matins and Lauds sung during the daytime, and Lady Mass would have had to move to the chapel in the retrochoir. This had been 'goodly prepared', with a picture on the altar of the Virgin Mary holding Jesus in her arms, and both sides of the chapel closed in with boarding.⁹⁹ At Durham Cathedral, Mary had issued statutes requiring celebration of Lady Mass daily with polyphony,¹⁰⁰ and several writers have observed that musical devotions to the Virgin were readopted widely. This liturgy now had new associations. It was evidence of Catholic orthodoxy, but more than that, celebration of the Heavenly Queen was encouraged as a flattering parallel to Mary, the earthly queen.¹⁰¹ Jesus Mass may also have restarted as it did at St Paul's Cathedral in London, but the evidence for Worcester is lacking.¹⁰²

A petition to Cardinal Pole by the Dean and Chapter in 1558, at the end of Mary's reign, expressed some concerns about the choir.¹⁰³ Inadequate wages were causing it to be 'much defaced' by a lack of petty canons, singing men and choristers. The petitioners suggested that funds intended for alms and other purposes could be reassigned to the choir, and they also hoped to increase the number of boys from ten to fourteen. But it is likely that the petition was never answered, as the Queen and Cardinal Pole died within hours of each other in November that year.

Queen Elizabeth I

Elizabeth was proclaimed queen on the death of Mary and was crowned on January 15th 1559. Her desire to move back to a Protestant Church must have caused anxiety in the cathedral community at Worcester. The dean and the bishop were close friends and both strong Catholics, and

⁹⁸ GB-WOr 496.5 BA9360 A6, View of Frankpledge I, fol. 272v (1554–5).

⁹⁹ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 248.

¹⁰⁰ Thompson and Falkner (1929), pp. lix, 159.

¹⁰¹ Wizeman (2004), p. 246; Page (1996), p. 342.

¹⁰² Rousseau (2011), p. 166.

¹⁰³ D71 Petition; for its date see Wilson (1925a).

all but two of the ten prebendaries had come into office during Mary's reign.¹⁰⁴ Elizabeth was the fourth monarch to impose religious changes within twenty-five years, and at a time when religion was central to the lives of most, ordinary citizens were having to have to adapt yet again. Shortly after Easter, the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity were passed, forming the basis of what became known as the Elizabethan Religious Settlement.¹⁰⁵ The 1552 *Book of Common Prayer* of Edward VI was again adopted, but with a few alterations, and from St John's Day (June 24th), services were held in English.¹⁰⁶

Bishop Richard Pate was deprived of his see, and Edwin Sandys, who had been sheltering at Strasbourg and Zurich during Mary's reign, was to become his replacement. It took over a month for Sandys to receive confirmation of the deaths of Mary and Cardinal Pole, but as soon as news reached him, he immediately started his journey back, feeling it safe to do so: 'dead men do not bite', he wrote to a Swiss reformer.¹⁰⁷ Sandys was radical in his beliefs and found the Elizabethan Religious Settlement an unsatisfactory compromise. He claimed that the see of Worcester was 'imposed upon me, though against my inclination', but he had accepted it to avoid the queen's displeasure.¹⁰⁸

Meanwhile, the queen had followed up the Parliamentary acts with a royal visitation of the whole country, which reached Worcester in October 1559.¹⁰⁹ Injunctions included a ban on processions apart from those of Rogationtide and a reinstatement of holydays, but with the proviso that people were encouraged to work on them in time of harvest with a 'safe and quiet conscience'. Singing and music were to be allowed if the text could be clearly heard, and a 'hymn or such-like song' could be included at the start or end of Morning and Evening Prayer 'for the comforting of such that delight in music'.¹¹⁰ The visitation in Lincolnshire had been marked by widespread iconoclasm,¹¹¹ but it is not known how much Worcester Cathedral suffered. Over the next few years, Royal Orders

104 Davenport (1927).

105 Act of Supremacy 1559, 1 Elizabeth I, c. 1; Act of Uniformity, 1 Elizabeth I, c. 2.

106 MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 248.

107 Robinson (1842), p. 3, no. II.

108 Robinson (1842), p. 73, no. XXXI.

109 MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 249.

110 Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 3, pp. 8ff (Injunctions 18, 20, and 49).

111 Bayne (1913), appendix, p. 676.

were issued to avoid further damage to churches, in particular forbidding damage to tombs, carvings of kings, princes and nobles, and images in stained glass.¹¹² Elizabeth also ruled that rood beams remaining be left, with the rood itself replaced by ‘some convenient crest’. The burning in the churchyard of the cross and the image of our Lady at Bishop Sandys’ visitation in May 1560, a year before this ruling, can be interpreted as those from the rood beam (although the image of St John would also have been expected), but evidence for the fate of the beam or loft has not survived.¹¹³ The Royal Orders also allowed steps to the Communion Table to remain, and tables of God’s precepts were to be written above the table. Valentine Green reported that at Worcester in 1792, when two pilasters were removed from the altar screen to accommodate a painting he had donated, arcading was exposed, and ‘parts of an inscription were observable in the spaces between those small pillars, but too divided to be connected, or satisfactorily explained’. Around 1812 this ‘very thick’ screen was removed, and the writing was described as ‘a few sentences from the Psalms, &c’.¹¹⁴

The Catholic dean, Seth Holland, remained in office until November 1560 but was replaced by John Pedder just after Christmas. Pedder has been called an ‘intransigent puritan’, and with Bishop Edwin Sandys, a formidable leadership for reform was set. Five of the Catholic canons were ejected, and of the rest, four agreed to conform, and one died in 1560.¹¹⁵ Pedder and his chapter met the requirements of the Religious Settlement but were criticised for the way they did this. The Elizabethan prayer book of 1559 required cathedral ministers to wear a surplice and academic hood, and the bishop a rochette, surplice or alb, and a cope or vestment (i.e., chasuble). A Communion cup was required for the whole congregation rather than a small chalice for the priest alone. The cathedral would have had vestments that were redundant and chalices that were out of date. The Catholic cathedral steward, John Bourne, claimed in 1563 that the prebendaries had divided the silver plate between themselves and some had intended to do the same for the

¹¹² Cardwell (1939), vol. 1, p. 289, Letter LIV, p. 294, Letter LV; Frere and Kennedy (1910), vol. 3, p. 108.

¹¹³ MacCulloch and Hughes (1995), p. 249.

¹¹⁴ Green (1796), vol. 1, p. 59; *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 82.1 (1812), 525.

¹¹⁵ Davenport (1927).

vestments until their unmarried colleagues objected.¹¹⁶ Bourne's report was partisan—his bias against married clergy was characteristic—but it gained some support from statements made years later by Henry Himbleton, sexton, and Roger Folioott, chapter clerk.¹¹⁷ Folioott believed that the plate was used for a 'silver pott and cupp' for Communion, with the rest converted into standing salts and silver gilt cups for the dean's dining table. Copes and vestments, he said, supplied some coverings for the Communion table, and the remainder were then divided amongst the chapter.

The large organ, installed less than ten years before, was also destroyed at this time. John Bourne alleged that 'The Pipes [...] are molten into dishes, and devided amongst the prebendaryes wives. The Case hathe made bedsteades, the lyke is doone and become of certayn tymbre and waynskott which quene marye gave for the newe making of the queer'.¹¹⁸

The Choir and the First Masters of Choristers

The few biographical facts known of the Masters of Choristers, or *Instructores choristarum cantandum*, are given by Ivor Atkins and Watkins Shaw.¹¹⁹ Richard Fisher (c.1542–69) served for the longest and was flexible enough to cope with the very different religious climates of three monarchs. The standard of Fisher's choristers was sufficiently high for two of them to be commandeered to sing in the Chapel Royal, and the Dean and Chapter accounts for 1564–5 record the payment of 20s for the expenses of them travelling to London.¹²⁰

The tradition of seizing provincial choristers for the Royal Chapel dated back to the early 1400s, but a new commission had been granted to the Master of the Chapel Children, Richard Edwardes, in 1561, to take as many singing-boys as he required from cathedrals and collegiate

¹¹⁶ GB-Lna State Papers, 12/28, fol. 125v.

¹¹⁷ A25 Depositions relating to Articles of Complaint, 1587.

¹¹⁸ GB-Lna State Papers 12/28/35 fol.125v, 'The dooinges of the deane and chapitre of Worcster' (?April 1563).

¹¹⁹ Atkins (1918); Shaw (1991).

¹²⁰ A215 Treasurer's Book, 1564–5, *in denarijs solutis pro expensis duorum coristarum euntum ad capellam Regnie xx.*

churches.¹²¹ As well as singing for services, Children of the Chapel were expected to act in dramatic productions at court, and a play written by Edwardes for this purpose, based on the Greek legend Damon and Pythias, has survived. Particularly because of the commitment to stage productions, modern views on the conscription of choristers have varied.¹²² Hillebrand, writing in 1926, argued that their lot was an enviable one with good teaching and care. Others believe there was increasing exploitation and abuse of the children through the century, with a rising association in the public mind of some playhouses with bawdyhouses. This culminated early in the next century with a ban on Children of the Chapel from such ‘lascivious and prophane exercises’.¹²³ In the 1560s, however, such concerns did not weigh with the Dean and Chapter. They were even willing to pay for the boys’ travel to London, despite Richard Edwardes having an allowance to cover this.

These may not have been the first Worcester choristers to sing at the Chapel Royal in Fisher’s time. In June 1552 a certain Richard Powell ended his time there, being one of three choristers ‘removed from the chappell for that his brest is chaungyd’. When this happened, the boys were usually sent back to their home cities, and these three boys were sent to Westminster, Canterbury and, in the case of Richard Powell, to Worcester.¹²⁴

Edwin Sandys was succeeded as bishop by an ageing Nicholas Bullingham and, five years later, by John Whitgift. Bishop Whitgift, during his time in Worcester, was much concerned with recusancy and with seminary priests active in the large Catholic houses in the diocese, a region that he described as ‘much warped towards popery’.¹²⁵ There was even a suggestion of dissidence within the choir. William Fisher, probably a lay clerk, was suspected of papism and alien religious beliefs, as was one William Cicill, and even the precentor, William Mitchell, was heard murmuring prayers in Latin, which was suspect.¹²⁶ The

121 Quoted from Chambers (1923), vol. 2, p. 33.

122 Hillebrand (1926), Vol. 2, p. 43; Munro (2020).

123 GB-Lna C66/1708, membranes 6d, 7d, but here quoted from Chambers (1923), vol. 2, p. 52.

124 *Acts of Privy Council*, 1552–4, N.S. iv, 1892, p. 78 quoted here from Leach (1913), p. 182.

125 Sheils (2008); Whitgift was bishop 1577–83.

126 A14 Canons’ Book, fol. 62v.

accusations came at a visitation by Bishop Whitgift, who dismissed them with a warning. They were unsubstantiated and are as likely to reflect a climate of mistrust and hatred of papists as genuine Roman Catholic belief in the choir.

Nathaniel Giles (1581–5) followed a former lay clerk, John Colden, as master of choristers, probably having been taught by him. Giles was born and brought up in Worcester and was a witness and beneficiary of Colden's will. He worked for his Oxford B.Mus. whilst at Worcester and moved on after four years. This was no doubt partly because he was ambitious, but there were signs of laxness and self-interest in the clergy who employed him, and perhaps a lack of inspirational leadership of the cathedral community.

Evidence of these issues emerged after an unknown informant sent a detailed complaint to John Whitgift, by then Archbishop of Canterbury.¹²⁷ Whitgift must have realised the concerns raised were specific and comprehensive enough to need investigation, and the bishops of Worcester and Hereford were given the task. Point-by-point responses to their enquiries were given by eight of the prebendaries and various junior staff, with a public notary acting as scribe. The whistleblower was clearly an insider who had detailed knowledge of the cathedral's management. Recent writers have been generous in their assessment of this evidence and have suggested that the chapter were largely exonerated or only at fault in minor ways.¹²⁸ However, whilst the prebendaries successfully justified their position on some accusations, and some other issues are too difficult to call, there remain concerns. In particular, the financial probity of some members of chapter is called into question. After a burglary at his house, Godfrey Goldsborough, who happened to be receiver general at the time, reimbursed himself from cathedral funds; in the same year, a levy to support the Dutch rebellion in the Spanish Netherlands appears to have been paid by most of the prebendaries out of their own pockets, but three or four of them made use of cathedral money; and coppices from which trees had formerly been felled and sold for the church's benefit were transferred to Canons Godfrey Goldsborough and Griffith Lewes with a peppercorn rent. This meant that they now received the profit instead of the church. There were also allegations that Godfrey Goldsborough's

127 A25

128 Noake (1866), pp. 540ff; Lehmberg (1988), p. 76.

brother had been appointed to the sinecure of caterer, who only had duties at the annual audit, and that no safe place had been found to keep the counterpanes of leases. These therefore remained in the possession of various prebendaries rather than under the care of the chapter clerk. These hints of lack of probity, self-interest, nepotism and inefficiency have to cast significant doubt on the lead given by the chapter, and it is unfortunate that the verdict of the two investigating bishops is not known.

The senior clergy were also lax in their appointment of a successor to Giles. A minor canon, Nicholas Bell, not mentioned by Atkins or Shaw, seems to have filled the position from June 1585, although there is no record of an official appointment. Bell had been one of the earliest king's scholars at Henry VIII's newly founded school and had proceeded to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.¹²⁹ By 1579 he was curate of the church of St Michael in Bedwardine, living in the parsonage there until he moved on to be vicar of St Peter's Church in 1582.¹³⁰ A few years later he was mentioned in an episcopal visitation:

Against Master Nicholas Bell, master of the choristers

[Accused] that he allowed the choristers to exact money from those wearing spurs during divine service. See Master Thornhill's notice.

27th [September] The lord [bishop] required him not to allow them to exact money during the reading of the gospel.¹³¹

It is noteworthy that the bishop, Edmond Freake, seemed to be happy that the choristers attended to this duty during services, as long as they avoided the time the gospel was being read (i.e., chanted). 'Spurs money' was a traditional perk for choristers and was demanded during services elsewhere, as in the playwright Thomas Dekker's sarcastic advice to a would-be gallant inviting the attention of singing-boys:

be sure your silver spurres dog your heeles, and then the Boyes will swarne about you like so many white butter-flyes, when you in the open Quire shall drawe forth a perfumed embrodred purse [...] and quoyt silver into the Boyes handes, that it may be heard above the first lesson.¹³²

129 Listed as King's Scholar in A203 Treasurer's Book 1543–4; Venn (1922).

130 Amphlett (1896), pp. 80–4, 87, 89; A85 Extracts from the Registers (unfoliated).

131 A14, fol. 70v. William Thornhill was the eighth prebendary.

132 Dekker (1609), p. 20.

Within a week of the accusation, Nicholas Bell had died—the visitation entry is annotated ‘he is dead’. He had only served in the role for nine months, and Nathaniel Giles was appearing at the vice-dean’s house recommending the lay clerk Robert Cotterell as his successor.

Cotterell was followed by Nathaniel Pattrick (1590–5), the son of a local weaver. He died aged twenty-six, having worked as master of choristers for only five years but leaving a significant portfolio of compositions. These include a short service setting, written no doubt for the Worcester choir, a work of merit, and his only composition to achieve wide circulation. Four secular songs survive,¹³³ including one that is incomplete. These would have been written for dramatic presentations by the choristers and provide rare evidence for the performance of such plays outside London. The troupes of child actors at the Chapel Royal and at St Paul’s Cathedral were in abeyance in the 1590s,¹³⁴ but G E P Arkwright suggested that provincial cathedrals continued the tradition, and he drew attention to a payment for the performance of two comedies by the choristers and other scholar-actors of Lincoln Cathedral in January 1593.¹³⁵

An example of Pattrick’s songs is *Prepare to die*, a stylised set piece of the form called ‘death songs’ by Peter Warlock, probably sung at the climax of the drama prior to the character’s demise. The songs are accompanied by a four-part consort. The instruments are unspecified but would most commonly have been viols, and it is possible that the choristers themselves played these parts. The Worcester records for the time are unhelpful, but Ian Woodfield and Ian Payne have found that choristers in some provincial cathedrals were taught to play the viol.¹³⁶

New Services at the West End of the Cathedral

In 1589, the Dean and Chapter allowed the city corporation to set up the west end for a weekly sermon. This came to be given on a Sunday

¹³³ The songs are: *Prepare to die*, *Climb not too high*, *Send forth thy sighs*, and *Sacred pan advance thy head*. The first three of these are found in the partbooks GB-Lbl Add MS 17786-177891, and the fourth in GB-Lbl Add MS 18936-18939.

¹³⁴ Gair (1982), p. 113.

¹³⁵ Arkwright (1913–14), p. 131; GB-Lbl Dean and Chapter Act Book A/3/7, fol. 124.

Quoted in Stokes (2009), vol. 1, p. 203.

¹³⁶ Woodfield (2010), p. 216; Payne (1990).

afternoon by a preacher employed by the corporation. Seven years later, the council added new seating for the ‘forty-eight’: the junior of the two council companies, the twenty-four and the forty-eight.¹³⁷ Both companies attended in their official capacities.

The corporation’s first choice for a city preacher in 1589 was an auspicious one. Robert Abbot was a distinguished divine who had just been appointed rector of All Saints’, Worcester and was later to become Bishop of Salisbury.¹³⁸ On publishing some of his Worcester sermons from Christmas 1596, he explained that he preached ‘rather to edifie the conscience of the godlie, then to feede the fancie of the curious’. He spoke warmly of Worcester and his ‘affection to that citie wherein I have bestowd the greatest service of my life’.¹³⁹ Probably to complete the arrangements for services in this part of the cathedral, Dean Francis Willis bought an organ from St Mary’s Church, Shrewsbury, in 1590 for which he paid four pounds and also gave a Communion book.¹⁴⁰

The impetus for installing the new seating was undoubtedly the need of the city chamber to provide a setting for the sermon, but the Dean and Chapter soon found another use for it. The statutes had ordained that Mass of the Holy Ghost should be celebrated daily at 6am in a place assigned for the purpose by the dean.¹⁴¹ This Mass was later replaced with an Early Prayers (Matins), and by 1608, and probably earlier, it had been moved to the west end of the nave.¹⁴²

* * *

The religious turmoil of the sixteenth century was, of course, unlike anything that had gone before, and liturgical changes had piled up so fast that it must have been difficult to keep abreast of them. The Elizabethan Religious Settlement, by its compromises and inclusiveness, was hoped to offer more stability, and with time it gained acceptance, but historians now believe that this was only accomplished slowly. It

¹³⁷ Audit of City Accounts, 1588–9 (GB-WOr 496.5 BA9360/A10/Box 2/1).

¹³⁸ Bond (1974), p. 45, appendix III.

¹³⁹ Abbot (1601), Epistle Dedicatore; Lock (2009).

¹⁴⁰ GB-SHR Churchwarden Accounts of St Mary’s Church, 1041/Ch/1, fol. 128r (1590).

¹⁴¹ Statute 32, translation in Leach (1913), p. 128.

¹⁴² GB-WOr 705.240 BA1442 Treasurer’s Book, 1607–8. The purchase of a ‘Communion Booke in folio’ for the service in 1610–11 must merely refer to a *Book of Common Prayer* (A26).

was impossible to please all factions anyway: both Puritans and Roman Catholics were unhappy with the prayer book, and those with strongly held Catholic views proved the most difficult to accommodate. If they were discreet about their religion, Roman Catholics were often given a degree of tolerance, but the harshness of Mary's rule had left a widespread suspicion and hatred of papists, and this was only inflamed by the attack of the Spanish Armada and later by the Gunpowder Plot. If there were hopes that a new century would bring a more peaceful kingdom and settled liturgy, they were to be stalled, at least in part, by the continuing blight of religious conflict that underlay so many of the country's problems.

4. Thomas Tomkins and the Earlier Seventeenth Century (1596–1646)

By the end of Elizabeth's reign, the text of the 1559 Book of Common Prayer had become widely accepted, and the substance of the liturgy was to continue with few changes until the civil wars. A new prayer book was issued in 1604 with minor alterations, and the King James Bible, which appeared in 1611, was found more acceptable than the 1568 Bishops' Bible by many and came to be established as the standard version. For the music and liturgy at Worcester, however, the most significant development was the arrival of a gifted musician, Thomas Tomkins. Tomkins was to become one of the most distinguished composers of his generation, but he would need to share his time between Worcester and London.

Thomas Tomkins was appointed Worcester *Instructor Choristarum* at some time during the year starting Michaelmas 1596.¹ He was not only the most talented musician to have filled the role but also the first outsider. It is likely that all his predecessors since the Reformation had been local men, either cathedral lay clerks or natives of the city.² He is often thought to have started his career as a London chorister; Atkins suggested that this may have been at the Chapel Royal,³ but for several reasons St Paul's Cathedral is more likely.

Very few lists of choristers survive for the choirs of either place, but

1 A233 Treasurer's Accounts, 1596–7.

2 Uncertainty only exists for Richard Fisher (c.1542 to 1569), about whom little is known.

3 Atkins (1918), p. 44.

there is one for St Paul's from 1598, which includes Thomas's half-brother, John Tomkins. John was his closest sibling in age and probably the one with whom he had the closest bond; Thomas was later to foster John's young sons after they were orphaned.⁴ If their father had chosen this choir for one son, it is quite likely that he did the same for another. Also supporting this is a second list of choristers, not a complete one and not referring to a single time, but included in the will of Sebastian Westcote, the master of choristers at St Paul's Cathedral, who died in 1582.⁵ This includes Nicholas Carleton, a known associate of Tomkins in adulthood, and their friendship could well have started as contemporaries in the same choir. Furthermore, it is notable that the composers Thomas Morley and Peter Philips were both choristers at St Paul's and became pupils of William Byrd, as Thomas Tomkins is known to have done.

Tomkins' Choir

The choir Tomkins inherited at Worcester consisted of ten choristers, eight lay clerks, an epistoller and gospeller, and ten minor canons. The epistoller and gospeller were laymen, and the roles of precentor and sacrist were assigned to two of the minor canons. Lay clerks were often artisans or tradesmen, occasionally general cathedral handymen, but largely men of modest means. The minor canons were not university-trained, and several, including the precentor, Humfrey Hoare, were incumbents of city churches and would have had to coordinate parish and cathedral attendance on Sundays unless they appointed curates. The epistoller and gospeller probably sang as lay clerks in addition to their duties chanting the epistle and gospel, but both were indicted for 'unsufficiency in singing' at bishop's visitations. Dr Thomas Spackman, the gospeller, was unusual in having studied at Christ's College, Oxford. He achieved a doctorate in medicine and then served as high master of the City Free School for several years before his cathedral appointment. It was unfortunate that his singing ability was limited—or perhaps he lacked application; the expression is unclear.⁶

⁴ Visitation Book of Bishop Bancroft, 1598 (Guildhall Library, GB-Lgc MS 9537/9 fol. 5v); Gair (1982).

⁵ Sebastian Westcote's will, GB-Lna PCC, PROB 11/64/142, proved 3 July 1582.

⁶ Foster (1891); Leach (1913), p. lxxxvii.

The musical talents of various lay clerks and minor canons were questioned at two of the episcopal visitations,⁷ and a comment was made that ‘The quire [is] decayed by [...] choice of men unable’. The Dean and Chapter seem to have been aware of an issue, admitting that choir members and other officers were ‘indifferentlie supplied by persons [...] as can be gotten together’.⁸ The problem arose from salaries which had remained static since the re-founding of the cathedral by Henry VIII. Annual wages were £10 for a minor canon, £8 for a gospeller and epistoller, and £6 13s 4d for a lay clerk, along with housing and firewood allowances. These payments had decreased in real worth because of inflation rates of two percent or more, so that they were equivalent to less than a third of their original value by the time of Tomkins’ arrival.⁹

The Dean and Chapter admitted to ‘knowing the extreame necessitie whereto divers of the best deserving of them are drivne by the present payments of Subsidies and other occasions’.¹⁰ The salaries were set by the statutes, but they could be supplemented in various ways. One method employed at Worcester arose from an Elizabethan law that ruled that a third of the rent set at the time of making a lease should be taken in corn (wheat or malted barley).¹¹ The quantities were fixed at the time of the lease, according to a valuation of 6s 8d a quarter for wheat and 5s a quarter for malt, giving some degree of inflation-proofing for the landlord. It was decided in 1632 that these non-pecuniary rents should be added to leases not already including them, and that they should be assigned to the choir.¹² Tithes on corn and pulse from Cleeve were also granted them, and there were plans to add the ‘corn rent’ already being paid from Broadwas and Overbury when the leases were due.¹³ But these supplements, particularly after the imposing of new subsidies (taxes) by Parliament to pay for Charles I’s war with Spain, could hardly compensate for a loss of over two-thirds of their income since the Dissolution. Even by the onset of the civil wars, the issue was only partly resolved.

⁷ A14 Canons’ Book, fol. 87v, fol. 95r.

⁸ Visitation of Archbishop George Abbott, 1616 (GB-WOR 714.7 BA 2082; D366 Miscellaneous booklet).

⁹ The inflation calculator at <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk> suggests goods costing £10 in 1542 would have cost £37.57 in 1597 with an average inflation rate of 2.4%.

¹⁰ A75 Chapter Acts, fol. 85v.

¹¹ The ‘corn rent act’ of 1576 (18 Elizabeth I, c. 6). From the eighteenth century, ‘corn rent’ referred (confusingly) to tithes paid in money.

¹² A75, fol. 102r.

¹³ A75, fol. 136r, fol. 117r.

The Routine of Services

The scheduling of services at Worcester was unusual. In many cathedrals, Morning Prayer (Matins), sermon, Litany and Holy Communion would follow one another with very little break between each. This made for a long service, and the Dean and Chapter were later to maintain that aged or sickly persons ‘in Summer time (much lesse in Winter) are not able to continue or hold out so long time’.¹⁴ To avoid this fatigue, and because of the preference of many townsfolk, the tradition at Worcester was to leave a longer gap between Morning Prayer (the ‘first service’) and the Communion with sermon and Litany (the ‘second service’). This allowed citizens to return home after Matins for a rest before returning for the remainder. The ecclesiastic and author Peter Heylyn, writing in 1636, believed this was the older custom and that it explained the names ‘first’ and ‘second’ services. He lamented that the practice had often been abandoned.¹⁵

The Elizabethan prayer book had decreed that in cathedrals and collegiate churches all should receive Holy Communion every Sunday ‘except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary’. The 1604 ecclesiastical canons reduced this to four times a year, but these were suspicious times, and a note was taken of any who failed to meet the required minimum, in case they were ‘not favourers of the true religion now established’.¹⁶ In fact, at Worcester a complete Holy Communion was only held once a month, and on other Sundays the congregation would leave after the Ante-Communion. The Communion table remained in an east-west alignment, placed west of King John’s tomb until 1635, an arrangement the polemicist William Prynne believed persisted at Salisbury, Winchester, Exeter, Bristol, and Carlisle Cathedrals as well as Worcester.¹⁷ According to the 1604 canons, the table was to be covered with a carpet of silk or other decent stuff for divine service and with a fair linen cloth for Communion. The celebrant was expected to wear a cope, a requirement that could not be met at Worcester as the cathedral did not possess one until about 1636.¹⁸ Kneeling was now prescribed for

¹⁴ A76 Chapter Acts, fol. 188r.

¹⁵ Heylyn (1636), part 2, p. 120.

¹⁶ See Cardwell (1842), vol. 1, p. 258, no. 24.

¹⁷ Prynne (1637), p. 161.

¹⁸ Copies were not owned by the cathedral at Brent’s 1635 inspection (see abstract of

all receiving Communion, and any that refused to do so were considered schismatics.¹⁹ For services other than Communion, it was considered sufficient for the clergy to wear surplices and academic hoods, but ‘due and lowly reverence’ was still to be made at the name of Jesus, and all was to be done ‘decently and according to order’. At Worcester, there is evidence that incense was being used as early as 1610–11,²⁰ implying that some attention was being paid to ‘decency and order’.

The Sunday afternoon service, known as the ‘Sermon’, had been held at the west end of the nave since the 1580s and consisted mainly of a sermon and a metrical psalm sung by choir and congregation with the organ. The tradition of combining the two had become common across the kingdom. It dated back to the 1560s in London, where an outdoor pulpit lay in the ‘Cross Yard’, beside Old St Paul’s Cathedral. Henry Machyn attended the preaching there in March 1560 and wrote in his diary that after the sermon, the large company ‘songe all, old and yong, a salme in myter, the tune of Genevay ways’.²¹ Giving the people a psalm to sing was thought to help them assimilate the words they had heard and was encouraged by John Calvin himself.

The Sermon’s popularity at Worcester meant that seating installed in the 1580s was already becoming inadequate when Joseph Hall was dean (1616–27). At this time it was extended to fill two whole bays at the back of the nave. The pews were tiered and rose as high as the bottom of the cathedral’s west window. There was no question of obstructing the west door, as this had been blocked up for several centuries. The seating formed a ‘graceful ornament to that famous structure’ in the view of some, and the service was celebrated with pomp and splendour.²² In 1622 the city ordered that members of the two governing bodies should attend sermons in their gowns and not their cloaks, and on festival days they should wear livery gowns, with financial forfeits if they failed.²³

metropolitical visitation), but had been bought by March 1636/7 (see *The differences betwixt the Lo. Bp*, GB-WOR 712.17147 BA3945).

19 Cardwell (1842), vol. 1, p. 259, no. 27; see *The differences betwixt the Lo. Bp*.

20 A26 Treasurer’s Book 1610–11 (unfoliated), *ffor a pound of ffrankyncense vjd.*

21 Nichols (1848), p. 228 A psalm was probably sung from the outset, but evidence only comes in 1618–19 when a payment for this was presumably disallowed as it was deleted (A26, p. 81).

22 GB-LnA State Papers 16/432, fols 48, 171.

23 Bond (1974), p. 176.



Fig. 19 Two metrical psalm arrangements by Tomkins: 'Dunfermline' for choir (Ravenscroft, *The Whole Booke of Psalms*, 1621) and 'York' for organ (Tomkins, *Musica Deo Sacra*, 1668), public domain

Both the Sermon service and an early Matins held on weekdays included a metrical psalm, although the choir only attended the Sermon. In the collection he called *Musica Deo Sacra*, Tomkins' son published several of his father's organ accompaniments for unison singing of the psalms, which would have been appropriate for the early Matins.²⁴ Tomkins also contributed four-part settings of two psalms to Ravenscroft's *The Whole Booke of Psalms* of 1621. These had the tune in the tenor and could have been sung by the choir at the Sermon (Fig. 19).²⁵

On weekdays there were two services of Morning Prayer, and this was said by Bishop Howson of Durham to be usual in other cathedrals. At Durham, the first started at 6am and was attended by 'householders and servants'.²⁶ It was held without the choir, and the absence of choral music made it a shorter service. At Worcester it continued to take place at the west end of the nave, and the metrical psalm was accompanied by the organ that had first come from Shrewsbury. In 1637 all the seating was removed from the west end, and the Early Prayers had to relocate. After some protest, Bishop John Thornborough had just returned the

24 There are four 'Tunes of Psalms' on p. 308 of the *Pars Organica* and a harmonisation of the Old 113th psalm tune after 'The end of the organ-part'.

25 A26 Treasurer's Book 1641–2, April 9 [1642] *To Jo: Lyes for enlargeing ye Quires seat at the sermon plac 0:9:0.*

26 GB-Lna State Papers 16/186, fol. 148.

nearby charnel house to the church and suggested that it could be used for this service. Archbishop Laud ruled, however, that Early Prayers should move to the Lady Chapel, and the old Shrewsbury organ followed it there shortly afterwards.²⁷

The second weekday Morning Prayers was a fully sung service in the quire. The prayer book of 1604 had repeated its predecessors in requiring that, where the service was sung, the lessons should be intoned ‘in a plaine tune, after the maner of distinct reading’. This, it explained, would enable them to be better heard. The same ruling applied to the epistle and gospel at Holy Communion. At Worcester the lessons at Morning and Evening Prayers were chanted by lay clerks according to a rota, and two clerks were criticised at the 1614 visitation for negligence in taking their turns at this.²⁸

A Secular Performance

As a payment was involved, the following entry in the receiver general’s book for 1603 must refer to a secular performance, outside usual commitments:

*Expensae Extraordinariae*²⁹

Item unto m^r Thomlins Brother xii^d & to six quiristers ij^s
by m^r subdeane, m^r harries, m^r Thornehill, m^r feriman & m^r Basdalls
commaundement & autoritie iii^s

The occasion may have been the November audit: the payment appears towards the end of the year’s expenses, and it was traditional to feast and have music on the final day of the audit. Mr Basdall must have been the prebendary, William Barkesdale, and Mr Thomlins is likely to have been Thomas Tomkins, and the adult assisting, one of his half-brothers. Several of these, including John and Robert, are thought to have been string players.³⁰ We can speculate whether this could have

27 *The differences betwixt the Lo Bp* (GB-WOr 712.1747 BA3945iv); A26, 1641–2, 25 January [1641/2].

28 A14 Canons’ Book, fol. 100r. The prayer book rubric was repeated word-for-word in the 1549, 1552, 1559, and 1604 versions.

29 A125i Receiver General Accounts 1603, fol. 61v.

30 John Tomkins was able to ‘tune sweet ditties to as sweet a string’ according to

been a performance of consort songs with adult support to a chorister consort or, just possibly, lute songs. John Dowland had published his first collection of lute songs a few years before, and they were just beginning to gain popularity. They were written for a solo voice, or less commonly more, accompanied by a lute. Thomas Tomkins himself is not known to have composed lute or consort songs, but Nathaniel Patrick wrote several consort songs, and John Tomkins has left one, *O thrice blessed earthbed*.³¹ The cathedral records do not refer to choristers being taught to play the viol, but a number are believed to have played as adults and probably learnt when they were young. Likely examples are John Wythie (later known as a 'famous master' of the lyra viol),³² his brother Humfrey Wythie,³³ and Richard Browne.³⁴ Not all would have been choristers in 1603, but they suggest that a tradition may have existed.

Alterations to Furnishings and Fabric in the 1630s

Laud's promotion to Archbishop of Canterbury by Charles I in 1633 led to changes throughout the kingdom. The Worcester dean, Roger Manwaring, was a man who sought advancement through servility, and, keen to make alterations that would be well received, he listed seventeen achievements to Laud in September 1635.³⁵ They included the erection of an altar stone of marble on four columns, behind which an azure hanging edged with white lace had been suspended. Over the altar a pall had been laid, with upper and lower frontals, and across the presbytery, an altar rail installed for Holy Communion.³⁶

Money had been found for these changes, but apparently not for

Phineas Fletcher, and David Evans has suggested that this may mean that he played lute or viol (Evans (2002), p. 58; Boden (2005), pp. 99ff); Robert was a viol player at court (Ashbee (1986–96), vol. 5, p. 33).

31 On Nathaniel Patrick, see Chapter Three, section titled The Choir and the First Masters of Choristers.

32 John Playford, in preface to *Musick's Recreation on the Viol, Lyra-way* (1669).

33 Humphrey Wythie's name is written in the tenor partbook of a consort set GB-Ob Mus. Sch. E415-418.

34 Richard Browne wrote a pavan for viol consort in GB-Ob Mus. Sch. E415-418 so he may have been a player.

35 GB-Lna State Papers 16/298, fol. 84; A75, fol. 107r.

36 In May 1639 the rail was lowered by six inches (A26, 1638–9).

buying copes. When Laud queried this, the chapter alleged that it was because of necessary spending on the fabric.³⁷ This spending was the subject of discussions between the lay clerk, Humfrey Wythie, and Canon Samuel Fell. At the time, Wythie was clerk of the works, and Fell was the prebendary assuming responsibility for the repairs. Letters survive from Wythie to Fell amongst archives of St Oswald's Hospital, in which both men were also involved.³⁸ Roof repairs were pressing, and the Dean and Chapter authorised the felling of twenty trees in 1634 to provide timber for these.³⁹ Lead needed to be sought 'for the repair of some places extreamly needful'. The pavement was also a problem because it was broken up in many places, both in the church and the cloisters. Although 'quarries' were used for much of the church, there was discussion of the relative merits of pale blue stone from Bidford, Broughton or Abbots Wood for an area of 480 square feet, perhaps in the sanctuary or part of the quire.⁴⁰

For timber, Humfrey Wythie travelled to woodland belonging to the cathedral near Kidderminster, making sure that Canon Fell realised the difficulties involved, as he suspected that the chapter took little heed of the trouble he was taking:

After tenne dayes expence, wth great dilligence & much toyle, in all manner of weather and wages, faire & fowle, high & lowe, rough and smooth, we returnd to Worcester from Eymore & Cornewood [...] ⁴¹

An Organ by Thomas Dallam

Another development in the earlier seventeenth century was the construction of a new organ. Until this time there is no information about any organ in the quire after the one built in Queen Mary's time was destroyed when John Pedder was dean. Tomkins' enthusiasm for the project may have been kindled by the new Thomas Dallam

³⁷ *The differences betwixt the Lo. Bp* (GB-WO 712.1747 BA3945iv).

³⁸ A125ii Receiver General Accounts, 2 October 1630; Letters Humfrey Wythie to Samuel Fell, 5 December, 12 December, 19 December 1636 in GB-WO St Oswald's records, BA9951, box 31, parts 24–36.

³⁹ A75 Chapter Acts, fol.107r, 7 November 1634.

⁴⁰ A26 Treasurer's Book 1610–11, 1618–19.

⁴¹ Letter in St Oswald's records (reference as above).

instrument at King's College, Cambridge. His half-brother John had been appointed Organist and Master of the Choristers there in 1606, the very year that the organ was completed. The detailed accounts that survive at Cambridge show it to have had Great and Chayre divisions, and a contemporary plan shows it not on the screen but at the east, with the Communion table lying east-west between the choir stalls.⁴² At Worcester the screen was a more obvious site, but first the funds had to be raised.

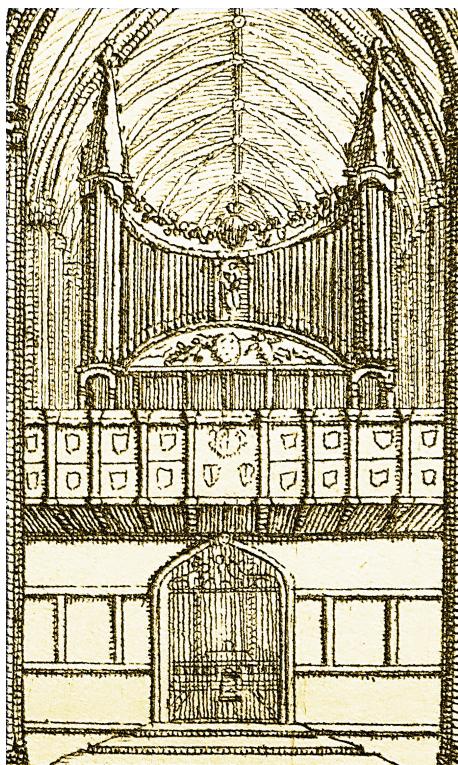


Fig. 20 The west side of the screen. Two rows of heraldic arms are shown; originally there were two more on either side of the quire door. The organ is the later one of Thomas Harris (detail from Green (1764), p. 50), public domain

Fortunately, Tomkins had the support of Dean Arthur Lake, and they conceived a plan to approach county gentry asking for donations. These

42 Chainey (1991).

would be rewarded by displaying the benefactors' heraldic arms on the screen, an arrangement that had the double advantage of adorning the medieval pulpitum and appealing to the donors. A contemporary document in the cathedral library lists a hundred and twelve donations, and Habington describes ninety sets of arms arranged in four rows on the west side of the screen (Fig. 20).⁴³ Many of the Worcestershire gentry were Roman Catholic recusants, but they seem to have been happy for their arms to be painted on the screen of an Anglican cathedral. Particularly generous gifts were received from Bishop Henry Parry, Dean Arthur Lake, and the Worcester Corporation, and their shields appeared in prime position.

Stephen Bicknell has given a good account of the instrument built by Thomas Dallam.⁴⁴ It was the first large instrument for which details survive, and a letter of Nathaniel Tomkins describing it has also provided the key to understanding the so-called 'transposing organ', tuned a fourth below the choir and often requiring the player to transpose.⁴⁵ As Thomas Morley wrote, 'such shifthes the organistes are many times compelled to make for ease of the singers'.⁴⁶ The organ and the screen below it probably did more to decorate and embellish the church than any other changes of the time, including the years of William Laud's primacy. The organ itself, finished in 1613, was 'adorned with imperiall crownes, red roses, includinge the white flouredeluses, pomgranades, being all Royall badges'.⁴⁷ Carving and joinery on the organ case and the screen were undertaken by the lay clerk Robert Kettle, and some of his work, which includes prebendaries' heraldry, survives at Sutton Coldfield⁴⁸ (Fig. 21). Dallam himself must have been impressed with Kettle's work, as he used his services again for an organ case at Eton College.⁴⁹

43 D248 Organ description and benefactors, 1613; Habington (1895–9), vol. 2, p. 462.

44 Bicknell (1996), pp. 77ff.

45 The reasons for tuning the organ in this way have been discussed by Andrew Johnstone. See Johnstone (2003).

46 Morley (1597), p. 156.

47 Habington (1895–9), vol. 2, pp. 462–7.

48 D248.

49 GB-WRec Eton College Audit Book, 1613–14.



Fig. 21 Carved work on the organ screen by Robert Kettle. The arms are those of Canon William Barksdale (1604–28). This panel originally bore his name and motto: 'Willyam Barksdale: Triticum non est sine palea [There is no wheat without chaff]' (photo by the author, Holy Trinity Church, Sutton Coldfield, CC BY-NC 4.0)⁵⁰

Congregations would have heard the organ playing alone at various times but, in particular, it would have been used while alms were collected at the Offertory during Holy Communion. Stephen Jones and Richard Turbet in 1993 found that the ground of Tomkins' keyboard *Offertorie* was based on one of the final phrases from Byrd's *Te Deum* from the Great Service (Fig. 22).⁵¹ It seems likely that Tomkins' music started life as an organ improvisation following the Offertory Sentence, based on a fragment of music that had been sung earlier that morning. The score is dated 1637 at the end, in a hand other than Tomkins'. This would have been a time when all his work was at Worcester, but the significance of the date is uncertain.

50 Compare Fig. 25.

51 *Musical Times*, 134 (1993), 615.



Fig. 22 The start of Tomkins' Offertory (GB-Ob Mus Sch C93), and the phrase it is based on (A3.3, fol. 6v) (transcribed by the author)

Tomkins' Absence in London

Tomkins gained a London reputation as a composer quite early in his career. He may have still been a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral when Thomas Morley was appointed organist there, and in 1601 Morley invited him to contribute to his collection of madrigals, *The Triumphs of Oriana*.⁵² Two years later Tomkins wrote an anthem for the coronation of James I and, in 1612, a funeral anthem for Prince Henry, both to be performed in Westminster Abbey. There are likely to have been many more compositions for the king's chapel, and Tomkins may have been absent from Worcester quite often. This is indicated by his answer to a query at Bishop Parry's cathedral visitation in 1614. On that occasion, article 22 reads, 'Whether dothe anie man of this churche under a prebendarie absent himself from the said College above one whole daie and night without license'.⁵³ It was answered by Tomkins, 'Mr Tho Tomkins presenteth him[self] egregiously faulty to the 22 article'.⁵⁴ The composing of anthems and services for the chapel may account both for his time away from Worcester and also for him becoming quite wealthy. In March 1612 he was able to loan the Dean and Chapter twenty-five pounds, a large sum that was of the same order as the entire estate of some of his lay clerks.⁵⁵

52 Morley was appointed at St Paul's at some time between 1587 and 1591.

53 GB-WOr 714.7 BA2070.

54 A14, fol. 102r. The word 'himself' is curtailed by damage, but the tail of the 'f' is just visible.

55 A26 Treasurer's Book 1610–11 (unfoliated); compare: probate of William Style, 1619, totalled £18; Richard Cooksey, 1626, was £32-14-8.

London commitments did not fill all of Tomkins' time, however. In 1612–13 he must have been busy in Worcester raising money for the new organ. Although the dean seems to have written to the city council, others were invited 'by the industry of the said Thomas Tomkins', according to an inscription on the organ, and the bishop's contribution was delivered to him in July 1612.⁵⁶

The progress the Worcester choir was making with Tomkins' frequent absences is difficult to assess. Having twenty men in the choir perhaps meant that inadequate singing by some could have been covered by others, but the contribution of the choristers is unclear. It was not mentioned in the 1607 visitation, and by 1611, one chorister, John Tomkins (not a proven relative), was accomplished enough to be singing at the Chapel Royal.⁵⁷ In contrast, two comments made three years later were rather negative. The visitation of Bishop Henry Parry in 1614 was documented in unusual detail, with the *detectiones* (disclosures or answers) to the bishop's articles of enquiry recorded for each member of the foundation who had an issue to raise.⁵⁸ One comment was, 'The Choristers have noe good voices', and the minor canon John Fidoe remarked, 'The Choristers voyces changed And some prentices to trades do serve as Choristers'. Visitation records are known for highlighting deficiencies and passing over excellence, and no injunctions by the bishop have survived, so some doubt must remain.

Tomkins was sworn in as organist at the Chapel Royal on August 2nd 1621, initially serving with Orlando Gibbons and then, after Gibbons' death in 1625, with Thomas Warwick. He was later joined by his half-brother John Tomkins, who was appointed gospeller but no doubt helped on the organ.⁵⁹ Organists were given discretion to arrange a rota amongst themselves, but a 1615 ruling by the dean of the chapel made it clear that they would all need to attend for All Saints, Christmas, Easter, St George's Day, and Whitsuntide. For a decade this commitment gave Tomkins a further reason to be in London for much of the year. Then, in the 1630s and 1640s there are indications that he was focusing more on the cathedral choir.

56 Bond (1974), p. 120; Habington (1895–9), vol. 2, pp. 462–7; Bishop Parry accounts, GB-WOR 009:1 BA2636/6ii.

57 Treasurer's Book, 1607–8 (GB-WOR 705:240 BA1442); A26 Treasurer's Book, 1610–11.

58 A14, fols 95r ff.

59 Rimbault (1872).

Renewal of the Cathedral Choir

Tomkins chose to opt out of the Chapel Royal journey to Scotland in 1633, leaving the organ playing to his younger half-brothers, John and Giles. The royal progress promised to be lengthy and tiring, and it is likely that, having reached his sixties, Tomkins was happy to spend more time in Worcester. He seems to have assumed responsibility for the Worcester affairs of Stephen Boughton, a canon whose prebendal house lay close to Tomkins' own. Boughton was a longstanding London colleague who had risen to the role of subdean of the Chapel Royal, and so would have been away from Worcester for much of the year. Tomkins accepted income and made payments on his behalf between 1630 and 1643.⁶⁰ He may also have been responsible for subletting Canon Boughton's prebendal house. A Mr Westphaling accepted the canon's allowance of firewood as his tenant in 1643,⁶¹ and an undated list of possessions in Tomkins' handwriting includes 'one bar of iron of Mr Westfoleing not brought'. The list is headed 'Tho: Tomkins received from Shellsley' and seems to represent belongings of Mr Westphaling which had been moved to Worcester from his previous dwelling at Shelsley Beauchamp.⁶² John and Anne Nott held the manor at Shelsley Beauchamp, and Anne was a granddaughter of Dr Herbert Westphaling, Bishop of Hereford, and was no doubt a relative.

A number of the men admitted to the Worcester choir over the next few years were talented enough to be appointed gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, either at the time or later. It is possible that they were drawn to Worcester by Tomkins' reputation or that they had been headhunted by him. Philip Tinker was the first. He had been born in Worcester and studied at New College, Oxford. He then served in turn as a minor canon at Windsor, at St Paul's, London, and from 1634 at Worcester, where he was also precentor. He joined the Chapel Royal at the Restoration.⁶³ Richard Jennings arrived as a lay clerk

⁶⁰ A125ii Receiver General Accounts, 1630 section: fols 3r, 112v; 1638 section: pp. 135, 240; 1643 section: p. 108; A26 Treasurer's Book, 1638–9. Unfortunately accounts between 1631 and 1637 are missing.

⁶¹ A28 Treasurer's Book, December 1643. Previous years' accounts do not give the names of tenants so we are unable to say when he moved in.

⁶² Bibliothèque Nationale, F-Pn Rés 1122, p. 188. Tomkins' biographers (Stevens (1967), p. 65 and Boden (2005), p. 179) have put varying interpretations on this list, but that given here seems the most likely.

⁶³ Baptised 20 October 1604 (Parish registers of St Michael's); Foster (1891); Fellowes (1945). His surname has sometimes been misread as 'Timber'.

at some time before 1637 and became a minor canon after Archbishop Laud had censured the bishop for failing to ordain him deacon. Laud reported that he had heard him in the King's Chapel and believed he was 'hardly to be matched for his voice and manner of singinge' elsewhere.⁶⁴ John Sayer, a tenor, was appointed minor canon in 1637 at the age of twenty-seven, and George Yardley, a bass, came as a lay clerk four years later. Both were later to sing in the Restoration Chapel Royal.⁶⁵

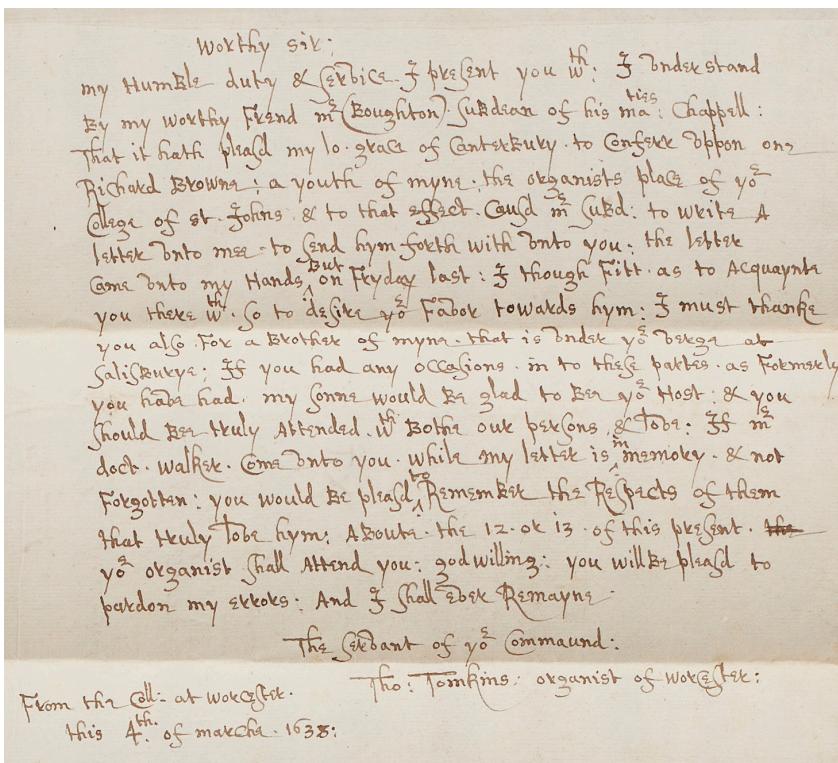


Fig. 23 Letter of Thomas Tomkins to Dr Richard Baylie, President of St John's College, Oxford (MUN LX35, by permission of the President and Fellows of St John's College, Oxford)

As well as these able singers, Tomkins had the help of Richard Browne, who was a chorister until about 1639, by which time, aged twenty, he

64 GB-WOR 712.1747 BA3945 'The differences betwixt the Lo Bp, the Deane and Canons, and the Cittizens heard and discussed', March 18 1636/7.

65 A116 Subscriptions to 36th Article; A65 Installations.

was perhaps acting as assistant organist.⁶⁶ Thomas Tomkins persuaded William Laud to recommend Browne as the new organist at St John's College, Oxford; the previous organist, Robert Lugge, had been removed from his post due to his Roman Catholic sympathies. Tomkins' letter addressed to the president of St John's survives in the college archives and is further evidence for the close cooperation between Tomkins and Stephen Boughton, who had acted as intermediary (Fig. 23).⁶⁷

Dr Baylie queried the letter with Laud and received the answer: 'For your organist, do with Brown what you will: but Lugg you shall not entertain to hazard the reputation of the College any more'.⁶⁸ The appointment in fact went to William Ellis, later known for his weekly music meetings. By 1642 Browne, still at Worcester, was serving as sub-deacon (epistoller) and two years later as minor canon.⁶⁹ He also helped to train the choristers and showed his ability as a composer by writing a consort pavan in five parts.⁷⁰

There is evidence of music copying in these years despite the rather thin survival of detailed treasurers' books. Paper was purchased in 1641 'to prick the Quyre booke', and over twelve quires (about two hundred pages) of music were copied.⁷¹ Rather unusually 'a faire large Base-booke, conteigning at least 5 quire of paper full prickt' was purchased for the choir in 1642. Then, less happily, the following year choir song books had to be repaired after they had been torn by Essex's soldiers in a month of occupation of the city by Parliamentary forces.⁷² Two expansive, large-scale, festive service settings seem to be the only choir music that survive from this time. They are the morning and evening settings from Byrd's Great Service and from Robert Parsons' Service 'for meanes in v parts' (including the Offertory Sentence, *Not every one that saith unto me*). Only a tenor part remains. Ivor Atkins believed the copies were made before the Restoration, and it is likely they date from the choir's renewal in the 1630s and 1640s.⁷³ If so, these challenging settings

66 A26, 1638–9; Thomas (1736), p. 109.

67 Archives of St John's College, Oxford, GB-Ojc MS LX 35.

68 Bliss (1860), p. 553. Letter from Laud to Baylie April 5th, 1639.

69 A26, 1641–2; A116 Installation Register.

70 GB-Ob Mus. Sch. E415-18, no. 17; Irving (1984).

71 A26, 1641–2, pp. 22, 23. There are no books for the 1630s apart from 1639.

72 A28 Treasurer's Book, 1642–3.

73 A3.3 Tenor cantoris book, fols 4v–15r; Atkins pencil note at start.

suggest a remarkable period of growth for the choir.

Five of Tomkins' verse anthems still survive with consort accompaniments, apparently intended for domestic performance, but there are likely to have been more. Devotional gatherings may have been hosted by clergy such as Bishop Henry Parry and Canon Nathaniel Tomkins, both of whom had house organs and spacious homes.⁷⁴ Protestant gentry in Worcestershire may also have provided venues, and these meetings became even more important later, when Parliamentarians banned church prayer book services in the city.

Evidence for the use of viol consorts in cathedrals is very slight, but cornetts and sackbuts may have been used to accompany anthems on occasion. Evidence for their use exists at some cathedrals, such as at Gloucester and Canterbury in the 1630s,⁷⁵ but it does not seem possible to prove that they took part at Worcester.

A Developing Crisis

Although standards were improving, attendance and popularity of the services were declining in the 1630s. Nationally, there was an increase in Puritan beliefs, with a shift away from the ideals that Archbishop Laud championed, a distrust of any ceremony seen as 'crypto-papist', and a growing distaste for the choral services. At Worcester, there were protests from the city Corporation about the altar set up by Dean Manwaring, about tapers being lit with too much ceremony, and about an excess of genuflecting and bowing towards the east. There were also crosses and images that caused offence—although the Dean and Chapter denied their existence—and the Corporation objected to the reading (i.e. chanting) of the epistle and gospel by men who were not ordained.⁷⁶ In contrast to the choral services, the numbers attending the Sunday afternoon Sermon were enormous. One of the prebendaries admitted that he had not seen a greater attendance apart from that at St Paul's. This disparity galled the chapter, and the dean was irritated

⁷⁴ Parry: accounts 16 May 1613, GB-WOr 009:1 BA2636/6ii; Tomkins: GB-Ob MS Tanner 45, fol. 19.

⁷⁵ Gloucester: Treasurer Book, GB-GL A1/2 pp. 81, 103, 126, 148; Canterbury: GB-Lna State Papers 16/286, fol. 118.

⁷⁶ D312 Answer to petition by the city; GB-WOr Audit of City Accounts (1641), 496.5 BA 9360/A10/Box 3/2.

by the sight of the citizens wearing hats on ‘their gay & gaudie seates’.⁷⁷

The issue was not unique to Worcester but was played out in various cathedrals around the country. At York there was ‘a Paul’s crosse auditory’ at the sermon in the quire, and the Lord Mayor attended in state, with a retinue including a sword bearer and many sergeants with maces.⁷⁸ The York Dean and Chapter petitioned the king to require the citizens to attend Holy Communion.⁷⁹ At Canterbury the citizens rarely attended quire services but went to the chapter house, which had become a sermon house, with ‘pewes or seates and galleryes and Scaffoldes’.⁸⁰ The Green Yard outside Norwich Cathedral provided a pulpit for summer sermons there, and Bishop Samuel Harsnett also faced the neglect of cathedral prayers by those attending sermons. His initial reaction was to ban the preaching in parish churches throughout Norwich until attendance at Common Prayer had improved.⁸¹ At Durham, Dean Richard Hunt was more open to compromise, and experimented with reading the Nicene Creed instead of singing it. In addition, the sermon in the quire service was preceded and followed by metrical psalms, although the first one was later dropped to save time.⁸²

At Worcester the matter was dealt with rather abruptly by the new dean, Christopher Potter, who banned the lectures from his first day of office until the citizens would agree to attend the service in the quire.⁸³ After a metropolitical visitation in 1635, Archbishop Laud had required the removal of the fixed, tiered seating at the west end of the nave. He had asked for it to be replaced with ‘handsome seates made with backs, to be removed att pleasure, and by a convenient number of formes’.⁸⁴ At the bishop’s request, though, a reprieve seems to have been granted, and no action was taken.⁸⁵ Unfortunately, Dean Potter and Nathaniel

⁷⁷ GB-Lna State Papers 16/432, fol. 173r, 18 November 1639, Letter of William Smith; and 16/344, 25 January 1636/7, Potter to Laud.

⁷⁸ Extracts from the journal of three Norwich gentlemen given in the Graphic Illustrator, quoted from *The Fabric Rolls of York Minster* (1859), p. 319.

⁷⁹ GB-Lna State Papers 16/375, fol. 131r.

⁸⁰ GB-Lna State Papers 16/286, fol. 118r

⁸¹ GB-Lna State Papers 16/188, fol. 3r; State Papers 14/165, fol. 2r.

⁸² GB-Lna State Papers 16/182, fol. 85.

⁸³ GB-Lna State Papers 16/343, fol. 210r. Potter was installed dean by proxy on April 30th 1636 (A65 Installations Register, fols 16v–17r).

⁸⁴ A75 Chapter Acts, fol. 120r.

⁸⁵ GB-Lna State Papers 16/432, fol. 171, 18 November 1639, Potter to Laud.

Tomkins managed to aggravate the relationship with the city. Both had years of experience of the University of Oxford: Potter was provost of The Queen's College, and Tomkins had studied at Balliol College for ten years. Together they hatched a plan to create a library in College Hall, most likely in imitation of historic ones at Oxford.⁸⁶ It involved moving the school out and into the far less satisfactory charnel house, used at the time by the bishop to store hay. Relations with the city deteriorated rapidly, Bishop Thornborough siding with the townsmen. Nathaniel Tomkins boxed the ear of a cheeky schoolboy, and the boy's parents threatened a lawsuit. The bishop also found him disagreeable, calling him 'the onely Incendiary betweene me and the Church'.⁸⁷

Calm and compromise were needed, and Thomas Tomkins seems to have been the one to take the first step. He made a gift of a loan charity for young Worcester tradesmen starting up in business, and the timing of this gift suggests it was not purely a philanthropic gesture but also a conciliatory one. The city corporation made a polite acknowledgement, but it failed to settle their rancour. They petitioned Parliament, not only about the school but a host of other grievances, including their resentment of Nathaniel Tomkins. The Dean and Chapter responded, hinting that they viewed Nathaniel's father's gesture as one of reconciliation: 'Mr [Nathaniel] Tomkins knows not wherein he hath offended any of the city in word or deed. His father hath been very charitable to their poor, and soe hath he', the expression 'their poor' being significant.⁸⁸

Two years after Dean Potter's arrival, there had been no progress on the overriding issue: the sermon was still barred from the cathedral, and the corporation still boycotted most quire services.⁸⁹ Laud stepped in and ruled that the sermon should take place at the crossing, which it did with temporary seating, and the west end pews were dismantled.⁹⁰ Over the next two years the service moved from the crossing to the quire and finally to various parish churches, but none of these was

⁸⁶ A75, fol. 126v, 29 October 1636.

⁸⁷ GB-Lna State Papers 16/344, fol. 220, 25 January 1637, Potter to Laud; 16/343; fol. 210, 13 January 1637, Thornborough to Laud.

⁸⁸ D312. For loan charity, see Newsholme (1995), p. 14.

⁸⁹ GB-Lna State Papers 16/343, fol. 210, 13 January 1637, Thornborough to Laud; GB-Lna State Papers 16/344, fol. 173, 25 January 1637, Potter to Laud.

⁹⁰ *The differences betwixt the Lo Bp* (GB-WOr 712.1747 BA 3945iv).

found satisfactory.⁹¹ Further delaying any resolution, for several months in 1637, both the sermon and the choral services were suspended when Worcester was hit by an epidemic of plague. Four died in the College and a further fifty-four in the surrounding parish, St Michael in Bedwardine. Laud informed the king that Bishop Thornborough had stopped the city's lecture,⁹² and the minor canon, Philip Tinker, wrote in verse: 'Music was then exil'd—the Singers mourn'd, Our Songs of Praise to Lamentations turn'd'.⁹³

Finally, in 1639, the mayor, aldermen and citizens petitioned the Privy Council with the support of the bishop and five prebendaries who were more open-minded and sought some closure. The outcome was that Laud ordered the installation of new seating at the west end of the nave.⁹⁴ As originally planned, it was to be movable with no tiering, and the seats for the Dean and Chapter and the Mayor and his brethren were 'not to be raysed above a handfull or 2 handfulls' above the rest.⁹⁵ Although it was not fixed, the choir's seating had a door, and so may have been some form of box pews.⁹⁶ Moreover, the Dean and Chapter paid for a pulpit-maker of Gloucester to make a new stone pulpit for the service, and the bishop's seat was attached to a pillar, requiring 'hewinge away' of part of it, and then a stone truss to secure it.⁹⁷

With political changes snowballing nationally, the Corporation had its way on other matters too. The school was moved back to the College Hall, the marble altar was removed and replaced with a table, tapers were lit without ceremony, and 'reverences' were moderated.⁹⁸ An anonymous Worcester citizen could not resist crowing over their success:

The Deane Dr. *Potter*, who trusted we should all be as Clay in his hands, now sees that his Faith as well as his Charity is mistaken, and is faine to exercise his genuflexion [...] His chiefe associate is a pragmaticall

91 GB-Lna State Papers 16/432, fol. 48, 8 November 1639, Daniel Tyas, mayor, and citizens to Laud.

92 Laud (1695), p. 552.

93 Tenker (1790).

94 GB-Lna State Papers 16/432, fol. 173, 18 November 1639, Canon William Smyth to George Cotton.

95 GB-Lna State Papers 16/433, fol. 138, 29 November 1639, Laud to Dean and Chapter, Worcester.

96 A26 Treasurer's Book, April 1642.

97 A26, 1641–2.

98 D312.

Prebendary, neare of kin in his actions to Dr Couzens, who (as they say) is but halfe Masculine, yet hath been very active for the Whore of Rome, and we doubt not but he will be (shortly) a roaring Canon: These two friske too and fro, here and there, and the times have put such an Argument to them, that they are afraid of the conclusion.⁹⁹

Dr Couzens was the Durham prebendary, John Cosin, who did indeed share some qualities with Nathaniel Tomkins: both were energetic churchmen with an interest in liturgy and ceremonial. Cosin was also a musician, who had even had the Creed sung to 'Organs, Shackbutts and Cornets' at Durham.¹⁰⁰

While the turbulent conflict between city and cathedral had stormed at Worcester, synods at Canterbury and York in 1640 had led to a new set of Ecclesiastical Canons consolidating Laud's position.¹⁰¹ These confirmed Dean Manwaring's changes already implemented at Worcester regarding the altar position, rails, reverence and obeisance on entering and leaving, and the use of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Very shortly afterwards, though, the calling of what turned out to be the Long Parliament in November 1640 signalled the start of dramatic changes in the Church. The Earl of Strafford was impeached within days, to be followed by William Laud a month later. Over the next two years the country moved towards civil war, with the king raising the royal standard at Nottingham on August 22nd 1642 to signal its start.

Civil War

The Worcester citizens had the experience of soldiers being billeted on them as trained bands were assembled by the Royalist arrayers. From December 1642 the Royalist governor of the city, Sir William Russell, arranged for a guard to be kept night and day at the College gateway and at other places.¹⁰² Tomkins also had personal problems: his half-brother John had died in 1638 at the age of fifty-two, John's widow probably not long outliving him, and his three young nephews, aged between three and ten, had come to Worcester to be cared for. Then in January 1642,

99 *A True Character of Worster's Late Hurly-Burly* (1642), p. 7.

100 Milton (2004).

101 Church of England (1640).

102 A28 Treasurer's Book 1642–3.

Tomkins' own wife of forty-five years died at the age of seventy-eight.

Laud's canons of 1640 were quickly reversed with a Parliamentary order that Communion tables were to be removed from the east end, altar rails scrapped, chancels levelled, crucifixes and images of the Virgin or of the Trinity abolished, tapers, candlesticks, and basins (for offerings) banned from the Communion table, and bowing at the name of Jesus or towards the east prohibited.¹⁰³ The sight of soldiers in the cathedral became familiar, one Worcester pamphleteer writing:

these Arrayers [...] brought not only their Families but good store of Ammunition, wherewith they boldly exercised upon the last Fast day, which terrified many good Christians who were then offering a holy violence to heaven for mercy upon the Kingdome, and then they marched to the Cathedrall Evensong, where to the horror of poore people and children (who love Musick dearely) they sate with their Carabines in the stead of Bibles before them, and there were not so many Petti-canons as Pistolers.¹⁰⁴

The ammunition store was later discovered in the crypt: eleven barrels of gunpowder and a pot of bullets.¹⁰⁵

Prayer Book services were stopped in September 1642 when the Earl of Essex's army occupied the city for a month. Essex had ordered that 'no soldier should plunder either church or private house, upon pain of death', but this did not calm his soldiers, or if it did, it came too late to save the cathedral.¹⁰⁶ The men had slept the previous night under hedges in the rain, singing metrical psalms to maintain their spirits. They had been inflamed by rumours of Royalist atrocities and were ready to take their revenge. William Dugdale's account under the date September 24th 1642 has often been quoted:

And when their whole Army, under the Command of the Earl of Essex, came to Worcester, the first thing they there did, was the Prophanation of the Cathedral; destroying the Organ; breaking in pieces divers beautiful Windows, wherein the Foundation of that Church was lively Historified with Painted Glass, and barbarously Defacing divers fair Monuments of the Dead. And as if this were not enough, they brought their Horses

¹⁰³ *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 2, 1640–1643* (1802), p. 279.

¹⁰⁴ *A True Character of Worster's Late Hurly-Burly* (1642), pp. 4–5.

¹⁰⁵ Ellis (1854), p. 327.

¹⁰⁶ Ellis (1854), p. 327; Atkin (1995), p. 50.

into the body of the Church, keeping fires and Courts of Guard therein, making the Quire and side-isles, with the Font, the common places, wherein they did their easements of Nature. Also, to make their wickedness the more compleat, they rifled the Library, with the Records and Evidences of the Church; tore in pieces the Bibles and Service-books pertaining to the Quire; putting the Surplices and other Vestments upon their Dragooneers, who rode about the streets with them.¹⁰⁷

In the nineteenth century, insertion points for rings fixed with lead between the stones in the cloisters were still visible, and these were thought to have been used for tethering horses at this time.¹⁰⁸

Pat Hughes and Annette Leech have questioned the accuracy of Dugdale's report; it was written almost forty years later, at a time when Royalist propaganda was needed. Atkins and Ker also disputed the claim that the library had been rifled.¹⁰⁹ A contemporary report from another Royalist gives a similarly damning, but again probably approximate account of uncouth damage and behaviour. It mentions broken bishops' beards, noses, fingers and arms, and the cracked crowns of King John and 'the other Kings that lie interred there'.¹¹⁰ A 'father of that Church' had drawn the writer's attention to excrement in the corners and also told him he had witnessed soldiers 'ease themselves in the Font and upon the Communion-Table'.¹¹¹ Besides this, Hughes and Leech have noted that a complete page has been cut from the cathedral accounts. It would have covered the period from January to November for that year and would have represented over eighty pounds of spending, most likely on repairs for damage by the Parliamentary soldiers. There seems to have been some later embarrassment about these, as other entries concerning damage 'by the Rebels' have had these three words scratched out.

The Worcester resident, Henry Townshend, recorded that the organ was damaged, one of Essex's soldiers breaking his neck in the process.¹¹² Bishop Griffith Williams of Ossory had been informed of the spoilage by 'one of the *gravest* Docteurs and Prebends of that Church'. He wrote

¹⁰⁷ Dugdale (1681), p. 557.

¹⁰⁸ Webb (1879), vol. 1, p. 151.

¹⁰⁹ Hughes and Leech (2011), p. 78; Atkins and Ker (1944), p. 20.

¹¹⁰ No other kings are buried there.

¹¹¹ Letter of Arthur Trevor to the Marquess of Ormonde, in Carte (1739), vol. 1, p. 14.

¹¹² Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 191.

that the soldiers had ‘thrown down the Organs, which cost above fifteen hundred pounds, and taken the Pipes and Copes of Prebends, and gone about the Streets, with the Copes on their backes, and the Pipes in their hands, dancing the Moris dance’.¹¹³ Since the organ was later dismantled, the destruction must have been short of complete, and it is now difficult to determine the truth about the extent of damage either to the organ or to the cathedral.

Services continued in a changed form, and on the very day after his arrival, the Earl of Essex attended Sunday morning cathedral service for the sermon. The last Wednesday of the month was kept as a fast day and was the occasion for another sermon, this time by Obadiah Sedgewick, a popular preacher travelling with the army. His sermon ‘fitted many of us [of Essex’s army] for death which we all shortly expect’, a subaltern wrote.¹¹⁴ But by November the city was back under Royalist control.

For the next three years and eight months, the city was governed by the Royalists, and cathedral services would have been those of the Prayer Book. Evidence that the choir continued to sing is given by a petition dating from the early years of the Restoration. In this, surviving members of the choir from 1645 and 1646 demanded back pay because they, ‘in the late warrs in the said yeeres [...] did faithfully and duly performe their duties and offices according to their severall capacities’.¹¹⁵ Their services would surely have been required on Whit Sunday, June 9th 1644, when King Charles I attended morning service in the cathedral. He processed there with three aldermen bearing maces and ‘my Lord of Barsheare’ carrying the sword. The mayor, Daniel Tyas, who wrote an account of the king’s visit, was also in the solemn procession, and the king heard prayers and a sermon preached by a Dr Mason. He received Communion from the Bishop of Winchester, and Daniel Tyas was impressed by his piety: ‘this was so devoutley donne that well may he be a pattern to all of sanctitie and devotion of life’.¹¹⁶ The king attended Sunday service a week later and then promptly left for Evesham.

Parliament issued a series of orders and ordinances during this time,¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Williams (1643), p. 46.

¹¹⁴ Ellis (1854), p. 330.

¹¹⁵ D194 Petition.

¹¹⁶ GB-Lbl Add MS 29873 Memorandum Book of Daniel Tyas, quoted here from Hughes and Leech (2011), p. 84.

¹¹⁷ See Firth and Rait (1911).

including in May 1644 a demand that altar steps should be levelled, copes and surplices abandoned, and organs taken away and utterly destroyed. Then in December there was an order to fast on Christmas Day as it fell on the last Wednesday of the month, a national day of fasting. This was followed in January 1645 by an ordinance to abolish the *Book of Common Prayer* and introduce the *Directory for Publique Worship*. With the Royalists in control, though, none of this had much relevance in Worcester at the time.

The siege of Worcester began on May 21st 1646 and lasted just over three months. For those in the city, it was a time of anxiety and increasing food shortage; they were struggling to cope with what the diarist Henry Townshend called 'oppressive insolency and plundering' from the occupying Royalist garrison. The troops numbered about fifteen hundred, and many were quartered with residents. Ominous reports that Oxford had surrendered were confirmed on June 25th, by which time citizens' wives had already been pressing the governor to negotiate terms for an honourable surrender to preserve the city. Messengers sent to the king for instructions had failed to return, and the governor, Henry Washington, was a professional soldier and would not have wished to damage his reputation by any show of weakness, so he continued to hold out.¹¹⁸ Townshend was alive to the impending crisis, but surprised that 'few are so sensible of their present danger, nay hazard of ruin'.

It seems likely that sung services continued according to the Prayer Book until the eventual surrender on July 23rd. Townshend recorded the dismantling of the organ and an incident during the choral service three days before:

The Organs were this day taken down out of the Cathedral Church. Some parliamenters, hearing the music of the church at service, walking in the Aisle, fell a skipping about and dancing as it were in derision. Others, seeing the workmen taking them down, said, 'You might have spared that labour, we would have done it for you.' 'No,' said a merry lad (about 10 years old), 'for when the Earl of Essex was here, the first man of yours that plucked down and spoiled the organs broke his neck here, And they will prevent the like misfortune.'

118 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, pp. 141, 128, 131; Atkin (1995), pp. 102ff.

Many attended the Early Prayers at 6am on the day before surrender to take their last farewell and to receive the Bishop's blessing.¹¹⁹

Later documents show that the organ was in the possession of Tomkins' nephew and heir at the Restoration, who then held the lease of Thomas Tomkins' house in College Green. These suggest that it was to there that the organ was moved at the end of the siege in July 1646,¹²⁰ and as it happens, this was fortunate. At York the organ was also moved into a private dwelling, in this case the house of a prebendary, Dr Hodson. But the houses of clergy were vulnerable. On the basis of an ordinance of 1643¹²¹ and with the assistance of musketeers if necessary, sequestrators were told to repair to the house of the said Dr Hodson to seize the 'organ pipes, books, coaps, surplisses and the like', and deliver them to the commissioner.¹²²

With the return of Parliamentary troops, prebendaries were immediately ejected and their estates soon sequestered. The surrender agreement stated that 'the city of Worcester and all the inhabitants shall be preserved from all plunder and violence of the soldiers' in the hope that damage inflicted could be limited. The act declaring England a Commonwealth was not to be passed until 1649, but the new epoch for liturgy and church music at Worcester Cathedral had begun on July 24th 1646 with the disbanding of the choir and the exit of the dean and prebendaries. The choir was not to return for fourteen years.

Although the cathedral clergy were ousted from their houses in College Green, Tomkins was allowed to remain. He lived in Worcester, 'reputed an honest quiet peaceable man' until at least 1650,¹²³ and probably until 1654–5, when he joined his son in nearby Martin Hussiantree. These must have been bleak years for him. Outside his window the war-scarred cathedral was in the hands of strangers, the heraldic glass smashed, the damaged organ in pieces, the choir dispersed, and all choral services ended. Archbishop William Laud, whom both he and Nathaniel had for years courted as their advocate, had been executed by Parliament, as had the Earl of Strafford, and they were followed in 1649

¹¹⁹ Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 191.

¹²⁰ A125iii Receiver General Accounts, p. 121; D508 Money owing to prebendaries.

¹²¹ Ordinance for Sequestering Notorious Delinquent's Estates, 27 March 1643.

¹²² Whiting (1953), p. 6.

¹²³ GB-Lna State Papers 23/124/273, Certificate of Mayor and Aldermen.

by the king himself. Tomkins moved to writing keyboard music with tributes to the men he had supported: a pavan and galliard for Strafford, a pavan for Laud, and a *Sad Pavan: for these Distracted Tymes* for the king. The king's pavan is dated 'February 14·1649', which is still sometimes referred to as being a fortnight after Charles's execution, although Ian Payne pointed out over twenty years ago that it was almost certainly a year later, because the year still started on Lady Day (The Annunciation, March 25th).¹²⁴

It appeared that posterity would have little use for Tomkins' sacred music. A Church of England clergyman, Richard Watson, wrote from Breda in the Netherlands in 1650, 'Our religion is gone, and within few dayes is expected the funerall of our liturgie which is dead allreadie'.¹²⁵ Watson had been following the negotiations of Prince Charles with the Scottish Covenanters and foresaw, correctly, that Charles would accept Presbyterianism for the three kingdoms in return for Scottish military support. But the liturgy was not everywhere dead. The day of the king's execution had been a Tuesday, and every Tuesday in the Royal Chapel in Paris, the chaplain, John Cosin, led services he had adapted from the *Book of Common Prayer*. Their mood was sombre and desolate. At Morning Prayers¹²⁶ the Venite was replaced by Psalm 121, *I will lift up mine eyes*, and the psalms, plaintive and supplicating in nature, were adapted so that the first verse of Psalm 16 read *Preserve the King O God: for in Thee hath he put his trust, rather than Preserve me O God: for in thee do I put my trust.* The *Te Deum* and *Magnificat* were replaced by Psalm 130, *Out of the deep have I called unto thee, and the Benedictus and Nunc dimittis* with Psalm 123, *Unto thee I lift up mine eyes.*

John Cosin's services were printed, no doubt with the hope that they could be used by those back at home. Prayer book liturgy in England did continue in some churches when the parish priest was a traditionalist, and also in some homes. Both practices were quietly tolerated by Parliament while they caused no political challenge. If any

¹²⁴ Payne (2000), p. 33. The new year started on March 25th until 1752. The king died on January 30th 1648/9 and the pavan was dated February 14th 1649[/50]. Payne has shown that it must originally have been written for a consort of viols and then adapted for keyboard, apparently to commemorate the first anniversary of the king's death.

¹²⁵ Clarendon State Papers (1869–1970), vol. 2, p. 58; quoted by Williams (2014).

¹²⁶ Church of England (1649); Maltby (2007), p. 172.

local church held such services, it is just feasible that it would have been St John's in Bedwardine, where Henry Wright, a Royalist and former city lecturer, was vicar. He had been called 'active and incendiary against the Parliament' a few years earlier and was later to give the sermon at the anniversary of the Battle of Worcester in the Restoration cathedral.¹²⁷ Perhaps because of his preaching ability, he seems to have remained vicar at St John's throughout the Interregnum.¹²⁸

In 2001 John Milsom published an article identifying three unknown verse anthems by Tomkins, one of which almost certainly comes from these years of tribulation.¹²⁹ The impassioned words of this long anthem are strikingly poignant; taken from Psalm 79, they must express Tomkins' outlook on the events that had overtaken the cathedral, the city, and the country:

O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance: thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones.

The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air: and the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the land.¹³⁰

Milsom deduced from the nature of the organ part that this was originally composed for accompaniment by a viol consort. It seems likely that it was written for prayer book services held in domestic settings, perhaps on significant days in the church calendar. Such services may have taken place in gentry homes, such as that of Sir John Pakington of Westwood, a staunch supporter of the Church of England. Nathaniel Tomkins, then living at nearby Elmbridge, is likely to have spent time as a guest of Sir John, using his archives while writing a biography of his grandfather, and Westwood House became a refuge for Anglican divines in these years.¹³¹

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¹²⁷ GB-Lbl Add MS 16178 Herefordshire Committee for Sequestrations, fol. 93v; Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 60.

¹²⁸ Buchanan-Dunlop (1946). The listing of Henry Wright in the returns of the Parliamentary Survey of 1650 supports Buchanan-Dunlop's suspicion that he remained at St John's throughout this time (GB-Lbl Lansdowne MS 459, transcript in Urwick (1897), p. 167).

¹²⁹ Milsom (2001).

¹³⁰ Milsom (2001), p. 55.

¹³¹ Gilbert (2016), p. 211.

Before the expulsion of the clergy and choir, Thomas Tomkins would have brought distinction to the city by his growing London reputation, but his frequent absences must have often caused problems. The choir's rebirth in the 1630s came almost too late. By then public opinion was evolving, there was spreading hostility to the choral services, and the conservative clergy were considered inflexible and obstructive. Meanwhile, public support for the markedly Puritan sermon service was growing, and it was attracting a huge attendance. Dark omens must have been apparent for the prayer book services by 1640, and from then on developments slid by with shocking speed.

Tomkins died in 1656. Had he lived another year, he would have heard of the appointment of his nephew Thomas, fostered in Worcester from infancy, as a fellow at All Souls College, Oxford. His election, despite his outspoken denouncement of Puritan ideals and worship, would have been unlikely only a few years before. It was an early sign of a trend of Royalists returning to Oxford, which we can now read as a portent of the changes to follow three years later.¹³²

132 Worden (2012), pp. 91–193.

5. The Interregnum and Managing the Aftermath of Civil War (1646–60)

By the time of the Royalist exit, it was clear that there was popular support for a move away from the prayer book services. The developments of the 1630s and 1640s had shown that many were more likely to attend the simpler, more Puritan worship. Some Non-Conformists, like Richard Baxter in nearby Kidderminster, saw this as a chance to establish a lasting national Puritan Protestant church if only the differing factions would unite and work together. But, setting aside its outcome, the civil war had one further knock-back to deliver, and by chance the calamity was to fall on Worcester. With that still in the future, though, the new administration lost no time in establishing a new order.

The importance of the cathedral pulpit was shown by the speed with which it was commandeered by the victorious party. The Royalist garrison marched out on July 23rd 1646, and Hugh Peters, a chaplain travelling with the Parliamentary army, preached there the next day. Peters had previously worked as an Independent minister in the Netherlands and then in New England and was known for his plain-spoken style in the pulpit. He had spent the afternoon of the surrender supervising the issue of passes to Royalists leaving the city, demanding each to promise not to bear arms against Parliament.¹

W R Buchanan-Dunlop identified a ‘Mr Jenkins’, who preached at the church of St Michael in Bedwardine three days later, as the zealous London Presbyterian, William Jenkyn.² If this is correct, Jenkyn would have been only

1 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, pp. 192ff.

2 Buchanan-Dunlop (1946), p. 32.

the latest in a series of distinguished visiting preachers with Puritan beliefs. In April, Alexander Grosse had come from Devon, and in May, George Steere from Newdigate.³ Both these men were, or later became, Presbyterians, and Grosse was described by a colleague as 'a skilful, powerful dispenser of the word'.⁴ Worcester preachers were represented by Rowland Crosby, and Crosby, although a minor canon, was unconventional. His wife and two sons were Catholics, but he was described as a 'preacher of God's Word' in the *Parliamentary Survey of the Lands and Possessions of the Dean and Chapter*, implying that he too held Puritan views.⁵ Significantly, all these men occupied the pulpit in a church with a Royalist rector and in a city with a Royalist administration. It was an indication of how much public opinion on religious conformity had shifted. No doubt the preaching did not meet with approval from all, but it was Dr Grosse's crude ribaldry and offensive references to women that the diarist Henry Townshend called out as objectionable, rather than his religious views.⁶

Simon Moore was serving as minister at the cathedral by June 1647 and probably had done so from 1646, when he preached the election sermon in August.⁷ Some city parish livings were now combined. The city Chamber Order Book lists them as: 'Martin and Nicholas, All Hallowes and Clementes, Hellens and Albons, Peters and Michaells, Swithuns of itself and Andrew of itself', and Simon Moore added the ministry of both Michael's and Peter's to that of the cathedral.⁸ The prefix 'Saint' was now discarded in each case to disown any acknowledgement of sainthood.⁹ Moore was an experienced clergyman, having served as curate of Frankton, Warwickshire, chaplain to the Puritan JP John Temple there, and lecturer at Atherstone.¹⁰ He had been a Parliamentary army chaplain to Lord Wharton, and must have impressed the Parliamentary

³ Malden (1911), vol. 3, p. 315.

⁴ GB-WOr St Michael's Churchwardens' Accounts 1640–99, b850 St Michael's BA 2335–16b, fol. 78v; Wright (2004).

⁵ Hughes and Leech (2011), pp. 91–92; Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 175.

⁶ Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 173.

⁷ GB-Ob MS Tanner 58 Letter of Simon Moore to Nicholas Lechmere, 1 July 1647, fol. 305r.

⁸ Buchanan-Dunlop (1946), p. 40; Parliamentary Survey of Church Livings 1650 (see Urwick (1897), p. 171, quoting Lambeth MS Survey of 1650, vol. 16); Styles (1978), p. 245.

⁹ Bond (1974), p. 416, 24 September 1646. The parish of St John in Bedwardine was not considered part of the city.

¹⁰ Hughes (1987), p. 70; Fielding (2012), p. 323, note 746.

commander, Major-General Whalley. In 1646, Whalley appointed the famous Non-Conformist preacher, Richard Baxter, and Simon Moore as the two ministers in a team attempting last-ditch negotiations to achieve the Royalists' surrender.¹¹ Moore was clearly able and respected, and after the Royalist capitulation he became a leading member of the community. By 1647 he was a member of the County Committee and was sent to London to present a petition to Parliament regarding the sale of the leaden steeple, a detached campanile next to the cathedral.¹² He also became the master of St Oswald's Hospital (almshouses).¹³

In common with many in senior positions in the army and also with Cromwell himself, in religious matters Simon Moore followed the Independents.¹⁴ Independents saw themselves as an automatos body of committed, born-again believers. Unlike the Presbyterians, they considered that each congregation should govern itself, deciding on details of the form of worship and controlling the admission of members to full Communion. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was therefore only available to an elect circle.

Simon Moore occupied the house of the second prebendary, which lay on the south of the slope leading down to the Watergate from the College Green. In 1650 there is a record of him having as assistant Gilbert Cox, a 'preacher of God's word', who had also taken over one of the prebendal houses. The Committee for Plundered Ministers, using Dean and Chapter revenues, had allocated £300 annually for sharing between 'the ministers of the city of Worcester', and in November 1650, these were named as Simon Moore and Gilbert Cox. The implication seems to be that the two men were working together.¹⁵ Moore himself became much favoured by the County Committee, who regarded him as a 'very faithful preacher of God's Word and of singular good affection to the Government of this Commonwealth'.¹⁶

¹¹ Willis Bund (1905), p. 189.

¹² St Michael's Accounts refer to 'Mr Moore one of the Committee 5 January 1646[/7]'. Later documents confirm that 'Mr Moore' was Simon Moore, see Cary (1842), vol. 2, p. 337; Audit of City Accounts (1647); Bond (1974), p. 433.

¹³ St Oswald's accounts: GB-WOR 899.749 BA8782/44 H17/2.

¹⁴ Sylvester (1696), part 3, p. 91.

¹⁵ Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 173; GB-Lip COMM VIa Augmentation Order Books, fol. 455r; GB-Lip MS1105a Trustees for the Maintenance of Preaching Ministers, fols 78r to 78v.

¹⁶ D224a.

The Plight of Expelled Cathedral Staff

The abrupt dismissal of almost the entire cathedral clergy and staff left many in a precarious financial position. This was a national problem, and an ordinance of April 1650¹⁷ gave responsibility to thirteen trustees for the Maintenance of Ministers to help resolve it. Their job was to support former bishops, deans, prebendaries, singing-men, choristers and other staff who had lost their livelihoods.

In general, the prebendaries were better placed than others as they held property and profitable leases. Their estates were placed under sequestration, and they were allowed to compound and retrieve them by paying a fine. But the process was slow: Nathaniel Tomkins in 1649 was petitioning that he had 'for these fower years lost the benefit of his estate which is almost the utter ruine of him', and Nathaniel Gyles also had a long wait and died before he could benefit.¹⁸ The fate of a few others can be traced. Thomas Lawrence agreed to adopt the *Directory for Publique Worship*, written in 1645 to supplant the prayer book, and became rector of the Chapelry of Colne in Huntingdonshire.¹⁹ Oddly, Giles Thornborough was allowed to retain his income whilst still losing his position because he 'opposed the rest in their superstitions and actings for the King' and had a 'great charge of children'.²⁰ Several other canons still managed to leave extended lists of legacies, but no doubt many would have agreed with William Smith that these were shorter than in earlier times. In his will, Smith added that he wished his funeral to avoid 'costlie and vaine solemnity suiting neither with my depressed Condition nor the present time', and a rather melancholy outlook must have been common amongst his former colleagues too.²¹

The experience of members of the choir was generally less satisfactory, although uneven. Of the minor canons, Rowland Crosby at St Swithun's was allowed to continue as a parish priest, but only after some delay as the Committee withheld the keys to the church while they considered his case.²² The lay clerk Humfrey Wythie came into

¹⁷ Scobell (1658), vol. 2, p. 114.

¹⁸ GB-Lna State Papers 23/218, p. 342; Matthews (1948), p. 74.

¹⁹ Wood (1691), vol. 2, p. 136.

²⁰ Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 237.

²¹ PCC Will, William Smith, GB-Lna PROB 11/278, proved 23 September 1658.

²² Hughes and Leech (2011), p. 91, quoting Daniel Tyas Memorandum Book, GB-Lbl Add MS 29873.

considerable wealth, and his estate was valued at well over five hundred pounds at his death in 1661.²³ By good fortune another lay clerk, George Yardley, became friendly with the antiquary Elias Ashmole, who spent seven months with the Royalist forces in Worcester in 1646, latterly as Comptroller of the Ordnance at Fort Royal during the siege. As a result, Ashmole employed him as his servant for several years.²⁴ Others were less fortunate and were compelled to apply for relief from the trustees:

Nov 22th 1655

Upon the humble Petition of John Sayer, Richard Browne, John Biddle, Nicholas Cottrell & John Leight, officers of y^e late Cathedral of Worcester, it is ordered y^t the sume of Twenty poundes be paid unto them out of y^e arreares of rent due before the sixt of January 1649 towards their releife to be distributed by Mr Hopkins. And Mr Laurence Steele, Treasurer is to pay the same accordingly.

Edw: Cressett Ri: Sydenham

Ri: Yong Jo: Pocock Ra: Hall²⁵

Nicholas Cottrell died two years later, in distress that he was leaving his wife and two young sons with ‘too little to mainteyne her in these miserable times’.²⁶ Richard Browne and the former minor canon and minister of St Michael’s, Nathaniel Marston, were also casualties of the cathedral upheaval, and Marston had been plundered by Parliamentary soldiers. Both had to cope in pauper’s lodgings.²⁷ For all these men there had been an abrupt reversal of fortune, and they had to accustom themselves to living in diminished circumstances.

Selective Poaching of Lead

Some orders addressed to one John Tilt by the County Committee still survive, apparently because he presented them to the newly-appointed

²³ GB-WOr probate records, Humphrey Withy (I), 14 December 1661. Withy died intestate.

²⁴ Burman (1774), p. 301. George Yardley took holy orders after the Restoration and is listed as a minor canon from 1665 (A26, 1665).

²⁵ Lambeth Palace Library, GB-Llp COMM IX/2 Charities and Pensions, fol. 96r; Urwick (1897), p. 53.

²⁶ PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/270/541, proved 30 December 1657.

²⁷ Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 269; St Michael’s Churchwardens’ Accounts, GB-WOr b850 St Michael’s BA2335/16b.

dean at the Restoration.²⁸ They all concern money raised from selling lead. Poaching of roofing lead may have started during the civil wars, at least from areas that were more accessible; both cavaliers and roundheads had needed lead for musket balls, and the roofs would have provided a useful source. Now it was to provide much-needed income. Lead was removed from all ancillary cathedral buildings that were considered dispensable, which in fact turned out to be almost all. College Hall, still serving as the schoolroom, may have been an exception, but even that needed some missing lead replaced at the Restoration.²⁹ There was a plan to re-roof the deanery with tiles once the lead had been removed; sale of the lead was estimated to raise £138 and replacement tiling to cost only £38, but there is no record of this substitution being attempted elsewhere.³⁰

Yet that was not the complete picture. Several of the orders refer specifically to the sale of 'Lead taken off the Colledge Church', while others confirm an apparently contradictory intention to keep the church up, to use as a public meeting place for the service of God. This paradox has not been commented on before, but the explanation seems to be that only part of the building was being conserved.

Services from 1646 on almost certainly took place at the west end of the nave. The seats ordered by William Laud, with the stone pulpit made by a Gloucester mason, had been designed primarily for listening to sermons, and these remained all-important. Also, this was the part of the cathedral best able to accommodate a large gathering; before the wars the quire and west crossing had both been tried and found inadequate. The use of this single area tallies with the findings at the Restoration of the Monarchy, when there is barely any mention of repairs being needed for the nave. In 1660, damage '(as is supposed) by the late powers' was found to include lead removed from the roofs of the east crossing and from vestries, and damage 'by unknown theifes' included lead taken from the north porch roof. This seems to hint that

28 The County Committee orders are D223, D224, D224a, D225, D303a, D605, D606, D607. On the dorsum of D224 is the comment *Papers delivered to Mr Deane by Jo Tilt, 20 November 1660*.

29 D404 *Damna Ecclesie Wigornie*. The school was in abeyance 1650–3 (Craze (1972), pp. 98–9).

30 Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 170.

the Royalists bore some responsibility for the latter.³¹ In addition, three thousand tiles were needed for ‘Covering the roofe of the upper South Isle Beyond the Quire’, and lead had been stripped from both sides of the quire roof, which needed 475 feet of oak boarding to replace skirting.³² The implication is clear: only the nave, along with the library over its south aisle, was being preserved; the remainder was left to decay after removal of accessible roofing materials.

What could have been the reasoning behind this decision? There was certainly a pressing need for money, but there were probably also rather ambivalent feelings about the building. Some undoubtedly recognised its architectural distinction. The diarist John Evelyn, for example, found the cathedral in 1654 ‘much ruined by the late wars, otherwise a noble structure’.³³ Others had reservations. Bishop John Hooper had said that if something was abused for superstitious purposes, it could never after be considered ‘indifferent or innocent’. But where did this leave the cathedrals? Had not superstitious falsehoods been peddled in them, futile indulgences sold, offerings accepted for the superfluous intercession of saints, chantries encouraged for the avoidance of a fictitious purgatory? There were those who believed places tainted by such evils should be destroyed and any proceeds devoted to the poor, although most seem to have held a more nuanced view.³⁴ The 1645 *Directory for Publique Worship*, a publication aimed at replacing the prayer book, tried to allay misgivings: ‘As no place is capable of any holiness under pretence of whatsoever Dedication or Consecration, so neither is it subject to such pollution by any superstition formerly used’.³⁵ Despite this, in February 1650/1 a House of Commons committee recommended that cathedrals should be surveyed, pulled down and sold if there were other churches adequate for worship. The stated intent was to ‘set the poor on work’ and to sell the building materials for their benefit.³⁶ The matter seemed to lapse but was raised again in Parliament two years later,³⁷ following which Alderman

31 D197 Damages done to the Cathedral Church.

32 D408 Weekly Accounts 1660; A73 Receiver General Fabric Repairs.

33 Bray (1850), vol. 1, p. 297.

34 Spragg (2003), pp. 197ff.

35 *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God* (1651), p. 40.

36 *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 6, 1648–1651* (1802), p. 535, 14 February 1650/1.

37 *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 7, 1651–1660* (1802), p. 245, 11 January 1652/3.

Edward Elvines was dispatched to London to argue the case for keeping the cathedral. Ironically, he was paid for this using proceeds from selling lead off the very building he was trying to preserve:

13 April 1653

By the Committee for the City and County of Worcester

Ordered that Mr John Tilt shall deliver and pay unto Mr Alderman Elvins Tenn Powndes out of the Moneys in his handes which was Rased of Lead taken offe the Colledge Church for and Towarde the bearing of Mr Elvines his Charge in Solliciting att London the keeping uppe the Colledge Church and Continuing it for a publicke Meeting place for the Service of God

Tho Yonge	Jo: Gyles
Gervase Bucke	W ^m Collins
Edm Younge ³⁸	

The issue seems to have been dropped again, and the movable seating at the west end continued in use. This approach was a short-term one: once the quire started to let in rainwater, the nave would also become inhospitable, but for now it provided the best space available for larger assemblies. The city accounts for the Commonwealth period include payments to workmen for making new seats, for mending them, and, from 1656 to 1660, to the cathedral clerk Henry Nason and Abraham Darker, the sexton, for laying out cushions before services. The accounts also mention a payment of twenty shillings for making 'sergeants seates in the college'. Although the term 'college' officially referred to the community established by Henry VIII, it was often used, as here, for the cathedral, or college church. The four sergeants-at-mace, along with the swordbearer, performed ceremonial duties with the mayor and aldermen, and making specific seats for them suggests that they attended in an official capacity.³⁹

The Puritan belief that the place chosen for worship was unimportant may account for the fact that venues of services were often unstated. It seems likely, however, that, with the west end of the nave set up for formal assemblies, civic sermons at the elections and at the assizes

³⁸ D607 Order by the Committee of the City and County of Worcester.

³⁹ The council members wore murrey gowns on official occasions (Chamber Order Book, 26 September 1656, fol. 25v, GB-WOr 496.5 BA9360/A14/7/1).

would have been held there. The election of the city's officers was an annual event taking place on the Monday after St Bartholomew's Day (August 24th), at which attendance of the twenty-four and the forty-eight, the two ruling bodies of the council, was mandatory. For several years after Simon Moore became minister at the cathedral, it was he that gave the sermon.⁴⁰ At the assize courts, a circuit judge heard the more significant criminal and civil trials before a local jury. They were held twice a year, in Lent and during the summer, and the sermon would precede the hearings, often being given by a visiting preacher.

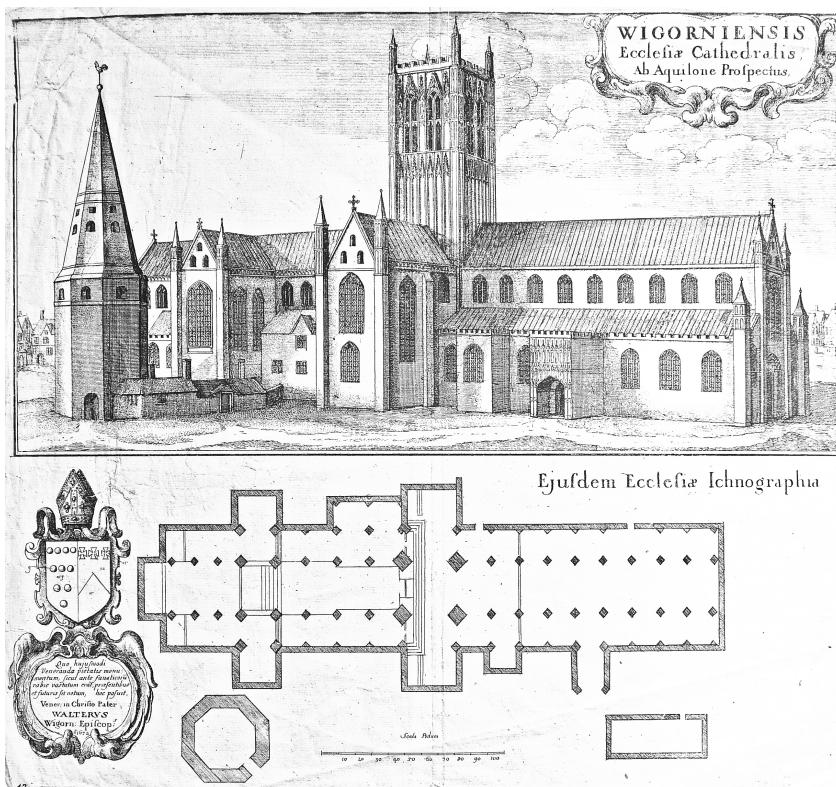


Fig. 24 Wenzel Hollar's engraving of the leaden steeple (dated 1673, so recreated from memories) (Dugdale (1655–73), vol. 3, p. 42 (photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

40 Audit of City Accounts for 1646, 1648, and 1649 (GB-WOr 496.5 BA9360/A10/Box 3/2). The preacher for 1647 is not recorded.

Raising Money

The Parliamentary administration had inherited a war-weary city; charity funds had been appropriated for the war, almshouses demolished, dwellings burnt, and the suburbs cleared. Many had been forced to cope with the relentless demands of quartered soldiers, and funds were needed to repair the damage. The leaden steeple, a freestanding structure next to the cathedral, seemed the most promising source of capital because of its large expanse of lead, valued at over £1200 (Fig. 24). Used in previous centuries as a clochium, by then it served only to store wood. It had been much admired in earlier years, and the dramatist and former King's School scholar, Thomas Nabbes, had written an encomium praising it and asking to be buried at its base.⁴¹ The petition for permission to demolish it, taken to London by Simon Moore in September 1647, was considered by both houses of Parliament and was accepted the following February.⁴² The lead was sold, as was the timber and even the remaining stump. It raised only just over half of the estimated value, but still a substantial sum.⁴³

The cloister and cloister garth were sold to a certain John Gyfford and Anthony Twyne of London, who sold them on to a Messrs Yarrenson, Baldwyne and Darling. They made their own profit by stripping out the lead and timber.⁴⁴ This exposed the upper side of the vaulting to the elements, and it was found at the Restoration that rainwater from the church, library and school (College Hall) had fallen on it, 'whereby it had bin much ruined'.⁴⁵ The chapter house suffered a similar fate to the cloisters, and in a letter of 1661, Canon Barnabas Oley wrote that neither the chapter house nor the cloisters had 'one inch' of wood left on their roofs.⁴⁶ As stripping the lead gave such a good financial return, it was also removed from the old dormitory, the Guesten Hall ('Dean's Hall'), the Gate House and the Queen's Chamber (a wainscot-panelled room that formed part of the deanery).⁴⁷

The poor lodged where they could in the decaying building. An entry

41 *An Encomium on the Leaden Steeple at Worcester* (1638).

42 Bond (1974), p. 433; *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 5, 1646–1648* (1802), p. 466, 17 February 1647/8; *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 10, 1688–1693* (1802), p. 62, 18 February 1647/8.

43 D247 Sale of Leaden Steeple.

44 GB-WOR 716.02 BA2071/v.

45 A73 Receiver General Fabric Book, p. 42.

46 D468 Letter of Barnabas Oley to Mrs Pitcher, 26 April 1661.

47 D197 Damages done to the Cathedral Church.

in the *Parliamentary Survey* of 1649–50 lists the sexton as living in ‘certain Rooms within the Cloisters, adjoining the Chapter House on the south and the Cathedral on the north’.⁴⁸ The rooms were a hall, a chamber and two or three other small ones. This description can only refer to the former *locutorium hospitum* of the priory, today serving as the Cloister Café, along with vestries above. It may have been incommodeous, but it still commanded a rent, the lowest in the survey at 20s a year. At the Restoration, payments were made to ‘old martin’ and to ‘widow Hunt’ to depart from the house in the cloisters, which seems likely to have been this one.⁴⁹ Canon J M Wilson also reported that the north triforium of the nave had been occupied as a dwelling.⁵⁰ He was referring to the roof space above the north aisle and more particularly to the two rooms leading off this: one above the Jesus Chapel (known traditionally as the ‘barber’s shop’) and one over the north porch. These rooms must have been let rent-free, as they do not appear in the *Parliamentary Survey*.

Despite the deterioration in the fabric of the cathedral, care seems to have been taken to preserve the library, which remained in the room (or rooms) above the south nave aisle. The house on the north side of the cathedral that had once been occupied by the monastic sacrist was allocated in 1648 to John Seaverne, gent, rent-free ‘in regard of his keeping the Library of the Cathedral’.⁵¹ John Seaverne had reason to be glad of the change in cathedral administration. His son, also called John, had been at the forefront of the dispute between city and cathedral; he was the schoolboy who had had his ear boxed by Nathaniel Tomkins in a notorious incident. Tomkins had been irritated by a number of boys who had come ‘thrusting and thronging upon him’ in an insolent manner after a service, but his action had inflamed public opinion. The boy’s father intended to sue Tomkins for hitting his son in the church, and Dean Potter warned that he was withdrawing the boy’s school exhibition.⁵² Ultimately discretion prevailed in a volatile and overheated city, and neither threat appears to have been realised.⁵³ The library seems

⁴⁸ Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 176.

⁴⁹ A73, p. 53 (1661).

⁵⁰ Wilson (1923), pp. 31–32. It has not been possible to trace the evidence for this claim, but Canon Wilson’s knowledge of the cathedral archives was unrivalled.

⁵¹ Cave and Wilson (1924), pp. 174–75. Dated the last day of February 1648, according to the survey John Seaverne had already been occupying the house for three years. The house appears on Fig. 24.

⁵² GB-Lna State Papers 16/344, fol. 220, 25 January 1636/7, Potter to Laud; D867, *Jan 18 1636 Severn's boy put from his exhibition [in Potter's hand]*; Noake (1866), p. 395.

⁵³ John Seavern was a King’s Scholar from 1636 to 1639, the only scholar with this

to have been well cared-for, although very few archives have survived from the time.⁵⁴ A book of accounts for the period 1655–60 is an exception, and in this the cathedral treasurer, Francis Walker, notes the rents he has received from manors formerly belonging to the Dean and Chapter, and payments made for maintenance of highways, for the forty scholars at the school, and for almsmen.⁵⁵

Trouble in the City

For some months following the Parliamentary takeover in 1646, the city, in the opinion of Simon Moore, ‘came on in such a way of reformacion that it rejoyced all honest hearts’.⁵⁶ But this was not to last, and annoyance and resentment arose from the posting of Parliamentary soldiers under the command of one Lieutenant Colonel Peckham. Moore’s bullish approach may have inflamed the military. As well as bandying general abuse—‘roundheaded boys’, ‘roundheaded whores’, ‘gospell whores’—they insulted him personally as ‘bawlinge moore’. They also incited disorder by drinking the Queen’s health and that of Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice.

Many soldiers were becoming disillusioned at the end of the First Civil War. Some were not fully committed to the Parliamentary cause, most were living far from home with arrears of pay owing, and for all the prospect of disbandment loomed, with the threat of defaulted payment.⁵⁷ Inciting disturbance and affray was a way of expressing pent-up frustration and anger. They further offended opinion by Morris dancing about the city, a traditional Whitsuntide tradition, in the knowledge that both dancing and Whitsun had been abolished by law. Simon Moore took the opportunity immediately after a cathedral morning service to raise the issue with Parliamentary officers. The congregation had not left and so were able to witness the exchange, which Moore related as follows:

The Last Lords day after the ordinance [i.e., Holy Communion] ended, I spake to the officers beseechinge them in Christs name to restrayne these

surname (Leach (1913), pp. 279–80). He was probably too young himself to be identified as the librarian occupying the house from 1645.

54 Atkins and Ker (1944), pp. 15ff.

55 A125ii Accounts.

56 GB-Ob Tanner MS 58, fol. 305r to 305v.

57 Morrill (1993).

violent abusive practises of the Souldiers, & told them withall that I was informed that Tuesday followinge, called heretofore Peter's day, was designed amongst them another day of misrule, & with all earnestnes & humility (as the whole congregacion will witnes) intreated ther care for prevencion of that, which was so priudicall: instead of thankes I was openly & publikly affronted by the officers: first by ye Leuetenant Collonell himselfe & then by Captayne ffoxe ther Comissary or muster master: who rebuked me in the face of the wholl congregacion wherin were both souldiers & malignants good store . . .⁵⁸

Moore's pleas probably increased the hostility. The soldiers spoke of fetching the parson out of the College and causing his death, and on the last Wednesday in June, he felt too intimidated to keep the monthly fast day at the cathedral.⁵⁹ He wrote to the Parliamentarian barrister, Nicholas Lechmere, asking him to show the letter to all knights of the shire. Lechmere was an MP and went further: five days later it was being read out in Parliament, and after further reports of 'malignants' in the county the next year, Parliament ordered strengthening of the county's defences.⁶⁰

Moving towards a New Civil War

Charles was crowned King of Scotland at Scone in January 1651. To achieve the support of the Scottish army, he had reluctantly committed to the Solemn League and Covenant, aligning the English Church with the Presbyterians, and in late July he marched with his troops into England. After encountering Parliamentary forces at Warrington in north Cheshire on August 13th, the army managed to cross the River Mersey. Then, at a council of war, Charles decided to aim for Worcester rather than making straight for London.⁶¹

The Parliamentary Committee in Worcester, which included the cathedral minister Simon Moore, aware of the possibility of Charles's approach, shored up the defences of the city and made ready to defend it. However, on the Thursday a week after the Warrington skirmish, they received a message from the mayor and sheriff asking for a meeting to

58 GB-Ob Tanner MS 58, fol. 305r to 305v.

59 The fourth Wednesday of the month was treated as a fast day between 1642 and 1649.

60 *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 5, 1646–1648* (1802), p. 235, 6 July 1647; p. 631, 11 July 1648.

61 Atkin (1995); Atkin (1998).

discuss 'the peaceable entry of the enemy into the city'.⁶² On Saturday, no reinforcements having arrived, the Committee beat a prudent escape to Gloucester as the Scots and Royalists arrived, and Charles made a formal entry into the city. The following day Charles attended a cathedral service, and the only remaining former minor canon, Rowland Crosby, preached a sermon. His words were probably intended to be flattering, but they were too close to the Episcopalian view of church governance and caused offence to some. The incident was related by Thomas Blount in 1660:

Upon Sunday 24. August, Mr. *Crosby* (an eminent Divine of that City) preach'd before *His Majesty* in the Cathedral Church, And in his Prayer styled *His Majesty Supreme head over all persons in his Dominions*: At which some of the *Scots* took exception, and Mr. *Crosby* was afterwards admonish'd to forbear such expressions.⁶³

Men were made busy fortifying the city, and after a few days the Parliamentary army guessed Charles' intent, one officer writing to another, 'their whole army is in the town, and in the parts about on the other side the river: all which gives me to believe that they are resolved to adventure their all in this place'.⁶⁴ Meanwhile, the troops were vengeful in the city against the more prominent Parliamentary activists, and in his absence, Simon Moore's house was ransacked and plundered.⁶⁵

The battle itself, the final culmination of the English Civil Wars, has been described in detail elsewhere.⁶⁶ Cromwell's despatch to the Speaker of the House of Commons, written the day after the battle, has become famous for his remark, 'it is, for ought I know, a crowning mercy'. Similarly, Hugh Peters, preaching the first cathedral sermon after the battle, advised troops they should tell their wives and children 'they had been at Worcester, where *Englands* sorowes began, and where they were happily ended'.⁶⁷ Both comments were of course marking the end of bitter civil wars that had torn communities and families apart, caused so much bloodshed and loss of life, ruined possessions and property, and had finished with the right outcome

⁶² Cary (1842), vol. 2, p. 335.

⁶³ Blount (1660), p. 17.

⁶⁴ Cary (1842), vol. 2, p. 348, 29 August 1651.

⁶⁵ D224a Order by the Committee for the City and County.

⁶⁶ Atkin (1995); Atkin (1998).

⁶⁷ Cromwell's letter: *Several Proceedings in Parliament*, 102 (1651), 4 to 11 September, p. 1569; Hugh Peter's sermon: *A Perfect Diurnall*, 91 (1651), 1 to 8 September, p. 1292.

as far as these speakers were concerned. It was, after all, one step along the road towards a parliamentary democracy. But for Worcester the day was anything but a crowning mercy, and it was to have no happy end. The common prisoners were herded into the cathedral,⁶⁸ but by contemporary rules of war, a city refusing to surrender could expect to be ransacked and looted. Sir Rowland Berkeley wrote five days later to his father-in-law:

You cannot hear too bad an account of the inhabitants of Worcester, all houses being ransacked from top to bottom, the very persons of men and women not excepted... On Thursday morning the dead bodies lay in the way from Powick bridge to the town, and on the ground on either side of it, and in almost every street of the town. Many lie killed in the houses, in the College and Church, on the Green, and in the cloisters and quite through Sidbury and about a mile that way.⁶⁹

The Parliamentary newspaper *A Perfect Diurnall* reported on the ‘multitude of dead carcasses, both of man and beast’, which made the city a ‘sad Spectacle’ and ‘very noisome’, and even Cromwell admitted to the Speaker of the Commons that some honest men had suffered ‘in the fury and heat of the battle’.⁷⁰

Over the coming months, problems were compounded by a troop of Colonel Tomlinson’s regiment, who demanded pay in arrears and were taking free quarter until they were paid. The mayor, Edward Elvines, petitioned the Council of State for their removal, writing about ‘the extreame poverty and sadd desolation of the City of Worcester’ and the ‘great mortality amongst the principall Inhabitants’ following the battle. Many surviving citizens were in despair; they were themselves reliant on charity from the county to avoid starvation.⁷¹

Cathedral Services

Presbyterians and Independents differed largely in matters of church polity, but liturgical differences also emerged in the debates of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. In 1644 this body was struggling to

⁶⁸ *A Perfect Diurnall*, 91 (1651), 1 to 8 September, p. 1291; Whitelock (1853), vol. 3, p. 348.

⁶⁹ Historic Manuscripts Commission (1885), appendix, part VI, p. 175.

⁷⁰ *A Perfect Diurnall*, 93 (1651), 15 to 23 September, p. 1285; Carlyle (1871), vol. 5, p. 212, appendix no. 22.

⁷¹ GB-Lbl Add MS 34326, fol. 54r.

compile the *Directory for Publique Worship*, with conflicting input from the opposing factions. The Scottish Presbyterian, Robert Baillie, was a member of the subcommittee honing the text and took a jaundiced view of the Independents' contribution, complaining 'we must dispute every inch of our ground'.⁷² It particularly irked him that they 'keepeid us long three weeks upon one point alone', that point being whether the people should take communion at the Table.⁷³ The *Directory* that resulted was approved by the Commons in April of the following year. It included detailed guidance for worship before and after the sermon and also for celebration of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The text was a compromise between the Presbyterians' and Independents' views and not universally adopted. It supplied a framework rather than a liturgy, something the Royalist cleric Henry Hammond was quick to point out, terming it a 'no-liturgy'.⁷⁴ In particular, the Non-Conformists rejected services that involved ceremonial display. The polemicist John Bastwick had memorably criticised the Laudian Church for being 'as full of ceremonyes as a Dog is full of fleas',⁷⁵ and Puritans considered ceremonies 'human inventions' with no scriptural authority. The only exceptions were those involved in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and even these were shunned by the Quakers.

To get some idea of the services in Worcester Cathedral at this time, we have to look to the earliest detailed account of Independent worship in the city. After the Restoration, the Independents had to move from the cathedral, and meetings were held in private homes. Later they moved to Warmestry House, the former home of the Warmestry family, near the river. A history of the Worcester Congregational Church was written into the Church Book in the mid-nineteenth century. Congregationalists evolved from the earlier Independent tradition, and this account includes the services at the time of the Independent pastor Thomas Badland (1663 to 1698).⁷⁶ The author, Samuel Blackwell, does not give

72 Baillie (1842), vol. 2, p. 195.

73 Baillie (1842), vol. 2, p. 204.

74 Hammond (1646), p. 95.

75 Bastwick (1637), p. 17.

76 The account survives in extracts made by a T Rowley Hill from the original written by Samuel Blackwell in 1841 (GB-WOR 898.5 BA2459/7/xxiii). The relevant section has been published by Urwick (1897), p. 82ff. This gives the earlier location as being the 'lower end of Fish Street', and Urwick found a reference in the returns of the Places of Religious Worship Certifying Act, 1852 (now National Archives, Kew,

his sources, and he was writing a century and a half after Badland lived. However, bearing these reservations in mind, we can compare the order he gives for religious services on the Lord's Day morning and afternoon with the national guidance given by the *Directory*. The two orders are remarkably similar (see Table 1) and suggest the cathedral service of the later seventeenth century, and perhaps therefore of the Interregnum too, followed the *Directory* in general outline. Some leeway was allowed by the *Directory*: scripture readings were to be by the minister, but he had dispensation to vary their length, and although the content of prayers was specified, their exact text was also under the minister's control. In particular, the Lord's Prayer was considered inessential and could be omitted.

<i>Directory</i> (1645)	Independents in Worcester (late 1600s)
Call to worship by minister	Clerk sang to begin worship
Prescribed prayer of approach	Short introductory prayer
Old Testament chapter	Old Testament reading
New Testament chapter	New Testament reading
Sung psalm	Hymn
Prescribed (long) prayer before sermon	Long prayer
Sermon	Sermon
Prescribed Prayer	Psalm or Hymn
Lord's Prayer (recommended)	Short prayer
Sung psalm (if convenient)	
Blessing	Blessing

Table 1 Comparison of orders of worship for the Lord's Day in the *Directory for Publick Worship* and in Blackwell's report for Worcester.

RG31/8) further identifying this as 'Warmstree House' in 1689.

The sermon was the most significant part of the service; the pulpit was thought holier than the altar, and the essential faculty for a Puritan minister was to be a 'preacher of God's word'. The *Directory for Publique Worship* gave detailed guidance for clergy on this.⁷⁷ The sermon should be based on a scriptural quotation, which was first to be paraphrased or summarised, then analysed or divided as appropriate. Finally, the doctrine it taught was to be expounded and made specific to the gathering. A preacher was to 'bring it home to speciall Use by application to his hearers', which the *Directory* admitted, 'to the naturall and corrupt man will be very unpleasant'. Sermons were followed carefully and remembered and were apt to be quoted back to the minister with questions or comments. Simon Moore experienced this on the occasion of a Parliamentary hearing in 1659. At that time, words he had preached on a verse from the book of Job regarding the fate of the godless were quoted in a somewhat clumsy bid to discredit his testimony.⁷⁸ The experience no doubt reminded Moore of how his words could be quoted, or misquoted, to his disadvantage.

The Lord's Supper was administered after Sunday morning sermon. Scottish Presbyterians preferred to receive communion sitting at the Lord's Table, while Independents expected it to be brought to their pews. The *Directory* compromised by just requiring that the Table was 'decently covered, and so conveniently placed, that the Communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it'.⁷⁹ Laud's movable seating may have helped to allow the pews to be arranged around the table so that the people could stay in their seats but remain easily accessible.

Services were the creation of the minister, who not only led the worship but preached, read the scriptures, and customised the prayers, leaving only the psalms for the congregation to participate in. Two alternative metrical translations of these were considered by Parliament to take the place of the Sternhold and Hopkins version that had probably been in use at Worcester since the late sixteenth century. A version by the Puritan MP, Francis Rous, achieved an accurate translation, but one that

⁷⁷ *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God* (1651), pp. 14ff.

⁷⁸ The occasion was an attempt to prevent the election of the Worcester MP, Thomas Street, see below, section titled Cromwell's Death and the Events that Followed.

⁷⁹ *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God* (1651), p. 24.

was ‘notably plain and unornamented’.⁸⁰ Revised by the Westminster Assembly, it was accepted by the House of Commons. William Burton’s rival translation meanwhile was preferred by the Lords. Both had aimed to keep the music as straightforward as possible: Rous had chosen tunes ‘of most general use’, and Barton also used familiar tunes and believed the multitude of melodies in Ravenscroft’s 1621 psalter were ‘unnecessary and burdensome’. Neither gained full approval of both houses of Parliament, so by default the Sternhold and Hopkins version remained in use.⁸¹

The *Directory* recommended the system known as ‘lining out’, in which the psalm was read out line-by-line before it was sung, to help those who were illiterate. The way metrical psalms were sung at this time has been discussed by Nicholas Temperley.⁸² They were unaccompanied and unharmonised, although William Barton in his preface did suggest the possibility of using an unspecified instrument to help learning tunes. Tempos were very slow, and this tempted some members of the congregation to ornament the tunes in their own manner. A sense of closeness to God was more important than closeness to others in the church, so any sense of ensemble was lost, but this was not considered a priority.

Interruptions by the Quakers

With the cathedral under the control of the Independents, the Sunday afternoon sermons were moved to Swithun’s on a Friday. Provision of the ‘minister’s diet’ replaced a direct payment, and one Thomas Vicaridge was paid to supply this.⁸³ The Swithun’s lecture differed from the former cathedral one in employing different preachers each week. An account of one of these occasions reached print because the preacher, Joseph Baker, was publicly challenged by a Quaker, Edward Bourne.⁸⁴ Baker was minister of Andrew’s, and in Richard Baxter’s opinion, ‘of extraordinary Prudence, Calmness, Patience, Gravity and Soundness

⁸⁰ Burrow (2008); Rous (1643).

⁸¹ Temperley (1972), p. 339 and footnote 24; Barton (1644).

⁸² Temperley (1972).

⁸³ Bond (1974), p. 431, 17 May 1647.

⁸⁴ Anonymous (1656).

of Judgment, neither for Prelacy, Presbytery, nor Independency as then formed into Parties; but for that which was sound in all the Parties'.⁸⁵ On this occasion, Edward Bourne interrupted the lecture, claiming that Mr Baker was 'no true minister of Christ because he did not abide in the Doctrine of Christ'. At Bourne's departure from the church, according to the published (Quaker) report, 'there was a loud and very uncivil clapping of hands, and hissing, by some then present of rude breeding and behaviour'. Despite this support from his hearers, Baker must have been rattled, finding it necessary to justify his beliefs to the assembly afterwards.

In Worcester the Quakers had become particularly vocal and were known for challenging preachers on religious matters in front of their congregations. Edward Bourne became a common offender. In 1647 he had interrupted a cathedral service to exhort the people to 'Fear the Lord God and repent', and the Quaker historian, Joseph Besse, recorded that he was committed to prison for thirteen weeks as a result.⁸⁶ Perhaps there was rather more to the disturbance than this; the sentence seems severe compared with a 'few days' for a similar offence by Thomas Goodaire at Swithun's, and Besse, hardly an objective chronicler anyway, was writing a century after the events. Edward Bourne was a Worcester resident known as a Doctor of Physic, although he called himself a chemist. He wrote an account of the earliest Worcester Quaker meetings, which seem to have been held within the cathedral precincts in the house of a widow, Sarah Drew. The first one had been arranged by a Yorkshireman, Richard Farnsworth, on a visit to a fellow Quaker in the nearby castle gaol.⁸⁷ The house was a poor one, opening off the windowless vaulted passage under the monastic dormitory known as the 'Darke Alley', and the former minor canon, Richard Browne, was a neighbour.⁸⁸ Many were said to have attended the first meeting, and the following year, George Fox, a founding father of the Quakers, visited the group at Sarah Drew's house.

Richard Baxter also experienced heckling at a Friday sermon he gave

⁸⁵ Sylvester (1696), part 1, p. 90.

⁸⁶ Besse (1753), vol. 2, p. 60.

⁸⁷ Penney (1907), pp. 274ff. Norman Penney identified the anonymous writer of the manuscript by the handwriting, which matched that of Edward Bourne.

⁸⁸ Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 176.

at Swithun's in 1655, when interruptions were made by the Quakers Thomas Goodaire and Richard Farnsworth.⁸⁹ He later wrote, 'I seldom preached a Lecture but going and coming I was railed at by a Quaker in the Market-place in the way, and frequently in the Congregation bawled at by the Names of Hireling, Deceiver, false prophet, Dog and such like Language'.⁹⁰

Richard Baxter

Richard Baxter's influence on religious thinking was gaining importance during these years. He believed that the proliferation of sects weakened the prospect of establishing a lasting Puritan, Protestant church. By promoting the motto 'Unity in things necessary, Liberty in things unnecessary, and Charity in all' and by joining Episcopal, Presbyterian and Independent factions, he hoped to produce a stronger and more durable national church.⁹¹ These factions all had different ideas on church polity. Episcopalian opted for a hierarchy of monarch, archbishops, and bishops. Independents required each congregation to govern itself, including the selection of a minister and the control of admission to Holy Communion and Baptism. Presbyterians differed from both, preferring a national system of church government with a local classis of a few elders and a minister for each church. Presbyterians also believed in predestination and supported the return of a monarchy. Which of these was necessary, which unnecessary?

Baxter broached this difficult issue at monthly meetings held at his own house in Kidderminster in 1652 and, feeling that the response was positive, took the idea to Worcester. Later he recalled, 'At a Lecture at Worcester I first procured a Meeting, and told them of the Design, which they all approved; They imposed it upon me to draw up a Form of Agreement'.⁹² This 'Form of Agreement' was constructed, and progress was rapid. A 'humble petition of many thousands, gentlemen, free-holders and others, of the county of Worcester' was taken to

⁸⁹ Powicke (1924), p. 247; Besse (1753), vol. 2, p. 60; Penney (1907), p. 275; Farnsworth (1656), p. 12.

⁹⁰ Sylvester (1696), part 2, p. 180.

⁹¹ Sylvester (1696), part 1, p. 103.

⁹² Sylvester (1696), part 2, p. 148.

Parliament, asking if they would arrange for representatives of the three churches to discuss unity on an official basis.⁹³ The response seemed encouraging, the agreement was published, and the Worcestershire Association of ministers willing to sign up to the project was created.⁹⁴ Over the next few years it became a model for imitation in several other counties. Geoffrey Nuttall has listed seventy-two members of the Worcestershire group, not all of whom were serving at the same time.⁹⁵ The city members were Joseph Baker, the minister of Andrew's and two Independent ministers, Thomas Juice of Martin's and Richard Fincher of All Saints' and Nicholas's. Simon Moore's name was conspicuous by its absence. The members by their agreement held monthly meetings in their home towns, and all gathered quarterly in Worcester, with the city council showing its support by a token gift of a pottle of sack.⁹⁶

Despite a promising start, agreement was slower to be achieved than Baxter hoped, and the death of the Protector in 1658 gave encouragement to the Episcopalians. Finally, the Restoration of Monarchy put an end to the movement, to Baxter's bitter disappointment. He wrote with deep regret of his colleagues' failure to grasp their brief opportunity for unity:

They were told that it would bring them to the Halter and to Shame, and turn a hopeful Reformation into a Scorn, and make the Land of their Nativity a Place of Calamity and Woe; and all this Warning signified nothing to them.⁹⁷

Cromwell's Death and the Events that Followed

Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658 happened to be on the seventh anniversary of the Battle of Worcester. It was a time of potential unrest, and the mayor, sheriff, and Captain Collins, who led an infantry company stationed in the city, took turns watching with constables at the Town Hall. Beer and tobacco, coals and faggots were supplied to sustain them through the nights.⁹⁸ The succession of Richard Cromwell was marked in Worcester on Wednesday, September 8th, and a report

⁹³ Baxter (1652).

⁹⁴ Baxter (1653).

⁹⁵ Nuttall (1950).

⁹⁶ GB-WOr Audit of City Accounts (1658). A pottle was half a gallon.

⁹⁷ Sylvester (1696), part 1, p. 103.

⁹⁸ GB-WOr Audit of the City Accounts (1658).

of the city celebrations was printed in the Parliamentary newspaper. Citizens assembled by their guilds with the streamers and banners of their trades and celebrated the proclamation with trumpets and loud music. Captain Collins and his infantry were in attendance and released volleys of shot.⁹⁹ The city waits were employed, there having been no mention of them since they had been suppressed in 1642, and council members were keen to demonstrate their support of the new Lord Protector.¹⁰⁰

In January 1659 Thomas Street was returned by the city as Member of Parliament. He had a law practice in Worcester, and the family home was a house in Friar Street now known (misleadingly) as Greyfriars. Simon Moore had initially supported Street's election, but with the Protectorate starting to look vulnerable, he suddenly became concerned about Street's Royalist sympathies. With various like-minded citizens, he accosted him in the Town Hall, according to Mr Street, 'openly reviling and threatening' him and telling him not to sit in Parliament. Simon Moore felt strongly enough to raise sixteen pounds from supporters and to petition Parliament. The case was heard at the Commons, but it is perhaps significant that the supporters did not include the mayor or aldermen, and little came of it.¹⁰¹

The tide was turning against Simon Moore, and Richard Baxter wrote that he 'somewhat lost the Peoples Love, upon Reasons which I here omit'.¹⁰² Whether this had anything to do with Moore's action against Thomas Street is now impossible to say. In 1661 he found himself in prison, accused of involvement in the Worcestershire plot led by Andrew Yarranton against the new government.¹⁰³ Yarranton claimed the plot was a fabrication and later wrote a detailed account of the matter, which he published. The Act of Uniformity gave ministers until St Bartholomew's Day (August 24th) 1662 to conform, and Simon Moore, along with others who were not willing to do so, was officially expelled, although by then the Royalists already occupied the cathedral.

⁹⁹ *The Publick Intelligencer*, 143 (1658), 13 to 20 September.

¹⁰⁰ Bond (1974), p. 359, 17 November 1642.

¹⁰¹ *The Humble Petition of the Well-Affected Inhabitants of the City of Worcester* (1659); Rutt (1828), vol. 3, pp. 253ff, 425ff.

¹⁰² Sylvester (1696), part 3, p. 91.

¹⁰³ The Independents Richard Fincher and Thomas Juice were also alleged to be implicated.

* * *

Cathedral worship had been led by the Independents throughout the period 1646 to 1660, a turbulent time that included the Battle of Worcester and its aftermath. Citizens had been killed, property and buildings damaged, and the task of rebuilding the housing stock must have seemed forbidding. The Independents had held a fairly strong hand in the city. Two other Worcester clergy belonged to the group apart from Simon Moore: Richard Fincher at All Saints' and Nicholas's, and Thomas Juice at Martin's. Since Simon Moore eventually covered Michael's and Peter's as well as the cathedral, five of the ten Worcester parish churches were administered by Independents, although it is now uncertain which churches were actually used for regular worship. Philip Styles has suggested that Michael's was not. There are no payments in the churchwardens' accounts to suggest that worship was taking place: no purchases of bread and wine, and no fees for visiting preachers. Indeed, Simon Moore's signature never appears with those of parishioners at the regular meetings.¹⁰⁴

The end came quite rapidly in 1660. Charles II's entrance into Parliament was celebrated in Worcester on June 3rd with ringing of bells: 'every street having at least 4 or 5, some 12 bonfires, with high and general rejoicings and acclamations'.¹⁰⁵ By July or August, the Royalists had taken over the cathedral, and repairs had started. The first early morning prayers were held at the west end of the nave on the last day of August,¹⁰⁶ and the first chapter meeting a fortnight later, but in the deanery as the chapter house was ruinous. The revolution in cathedral administration was almost as sudden as it had been fourteen years before.

104 Styles (1978), p. 245.

105 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 36.

106 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 59.

6. The Restoration of the Monarchy and Reinstating the Anglican Church (1660–1700)

The diarist Henry Townshend's daughter had been present at a bonfire on the evening of Charles II's proclamation day. She had 'drunk healths, and most violently railed against and bitterly cursed the Phanatics'. But not all were happy with her disparaging view of Non-Conformists, and some saw it as a judgement that within days she was dead.¹ Then, at the coronation, a 'seasonable memento' was posted around the city, claiming that the king intended to backtrack on his commitment to the Covenant and a Presbyterian religious union, a prediction that of course proved accurate.² These two incidents showed how tensions persisted in the city, while at the cathedral there was a single-minded drive to reverse the changes of the past fourteen years.

The earliest prayer book services to be celebrated in the precincts were on the initiative of William Harewell, a former rector of Oldswinford who had been deprived of his living during the Commonwealth. He officiated at St Michael's Church for a solemn day of thanksgiving 'for deliverance from slavery and bondage by the usurpers' on May 24th 1660, which even predated Charles II's entry into London. Two weeks later, he conducted a burial service for Henry Townshend's daughter in the cathedral.³ Townshend had first asked Simon Moore to preside at the funeral using the *Book of Common Prayer*, but Moore, singleminded as

1 Anonymous (1661), p. 52.

2 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 71.

3 Townshend (1915), vol. 1, pp. 42, 44.

always, had refused.⁴ Canon Barnabas Oley, who is credited with leading the cathedral repairs, joined the cathedral on August 3rd. However, work may have started a month before, as accounts to Michaelmas 1661 mention great and onerous repairs of the last fifteen months, which would reach back to July 1660.⁵

Regular services started at the end of August with 6am Early Prayers said by the minor canon Richard Browne, using the west end of the nave as before the civil wars. Three former members of the choir were paid as lay clerks from about this time,⁶ and a small men's voices choir consisting of these three and a few minor canons would probably have sung at the services. By November 7th ten boys had been recruited and were installed as choristers.⁷ Their early training was the responsibility of Richard Browne, perhaps helped by John Browne, a lay clerk. They seem to have aimed to rehearse them sufficiently to tackle the liturgy the following Easter.⁸ Four minor canons, two lay clerks, a gospeller and an epistoller who had survived from before the wars formed the core of the new choir, and they were joined by two former choristers, whose voices had by now, of course, broken. Others were appointed during 1661, and on Easter Eve, Henry Townshend was able to write, 'First quire service said and sung in the Cathedral Church of Worcester since the reducing of the City of Worcester by the Parliamentary forces, 25 July 1646'.⁹ The Easter Day liturgy would presumably have also been sung the following day. The choir only lacked three minor canons, and a new routine needed to be established. A chapter act of April 1661 proposed a choral service on Sundays, on Holy Days, and on the evenings before these.¹⁰ By May the next year, the choir had regained its former numbers: ten choristers, ten lay clerks, and ten minor canons.

The choir was to be a very fraternal one; brothers sang together, but also fathers with sons, and for a few years a grandfather, father and son

⁴ See Anonymous (1661), p. 52.

⁵ A29 Book of Acquittances, p. 9.

⁶ D511 Treasurer's Accounts by B Oley; A29, p. 18. The three were John Browne, Richard Hopkins, and John Laight.

⁷ A69 Installations Register, fol. 125r.

⁸ D471 Mr Oley's Charge, '2 Mr Browns' were paid for the period Michaelmas 1661 to Midsummer 1662, and they may have worked together before this.

⁹ Townshend (1915), vol. 1, p. 70.

¹⁰ A76 Chapter Acts, 27 April 1661.

together.¹¹ Many choristers went on to serve as adult choir members, and three of those appointed to the new choir were later to become lay clerks, and one a minor canon. There was however a class distinction. Although minor canons were happy for their sons to be choristers, it seems that prebendaries were not: the social gap was too great. Lay clerks supplemented their salaries by working as artisans or tradesmen, or by taking on additional roles for the cathedral. They included a glazier,¹² a painter,¹³ a tallow chandler,¹⁴ and a barber, gamekeeper, and rent collector.¹⁵ Despite income supplements, many lay clerks were very poorly off, their estates when valued for probate only amounting to a few pounds.¹⁶ Those with more wealth probably owed it to family or inherited money, and the value of Humfrey Wythie's estate has already been mentioned. Minor canons shared the same duties in the choir as the lay clerks, and yet there was a significant gulf between the two groups. As well as being in holy orders, minor canons were usually university-trained, rarely natives of Worcester, and often better-off than lay clerks because of their income from benefices. Four of them—John Sayer, George Yardley, Philip Tinker, and Andrew Trebeck—were talented enough to be appointed gentlemen of the Chapel Royal but would have been busy in London for part of the year. Philip Tinker, who continued his pre-war Worcester appointment as precentor, was even more committed in London, having been appointed precentor of Westminster Abbey and confessor to his majesty's household in addition to his Chapel Royal position.¹⁷ His time spent in Worcester must have been much curtailed, and he would doubtless have missed the first quire services because of preparations for the coronation in the Abbey on April 23rd.

Perhaps on account of being better off or more educated than the lay clerks, several minor canons have left evidence of other interests. One

11 Roger senior, Roger junior, and Thomas Fosbrooke.

12 Richard Hopkins: A73 Receiver General Fabric Repairs, p. 59; A26 Treasurer's Book, 1666–7, p. 19.

13 John Atkinson: A73, pp. 57, 68; D455a and D455d Bills of John Atkinson.

14 Roger Fosbrooke senior: A29 Book of Acquittances, p. 9.

15 Roger Fosbrooke junior: Witness for probate of Peter Horsey, GB-WOr 779 BA3585/7; A77, 2 October 1706; A125viii Receiver General Accounts, 1703 section, p. 40; A125ix Receiver General Accounts, 1712 section.

16 E.g., Edmund Evett (£3-6-6 GB-WOr probate, 19 January 1693/4), John Atkinson (£12-2-0 GB-WOr probate, 21 December 1677).

17 The Old Cheque Book, fol. 38v, quoted by Ashbee and Harley (2000), vol. 1, p. 109.

owned the tools and materials for organ building and also an impressive number of musical instruments: a clavicord, virginals, four viols, a regal on a frame, a lute, theorbo, and cittern.¹⁸ Daniel Kenrick has left some verse,¹⁹ and two of his poems have the distinction of having been set by Henry Purcell for soprano and bass duet,²⁰ and Philip Tinker also wrote verse and made a statistical study of the plague epidemic that hit the city in 1637.²¹

New Music

The first mention of acquiring music for the new choir was a payment to a minor canon, John Sayer, for 'a sett of printed song booke' on July 15th 1661.²² This must have been John Barnard's *First Book of Selected Church Musick*, of 1641. It was the only music that had been printed for church use and was issued in a set of partbooks for the *decani* and *cantoris* sides of the choir. At the same time, the lay clerk John Browne was given one pound 'to be earned out in pricking', a cheaper way of making sufficient copies of the anthems and services to be sung than buying multiple printed books. Barnard's set did not include organ parts, and an (empty) organ book was purchased from a local stationer in 1662, which was perhaps intended for these.²³ A month after the Barnard volumes had arrived, copies of anthems came by post from a Mr Loosmore of Cambridge, probably Henry Loosemore of King's College.²⁴ More were acquired by Canon Oley, who travelled on church business between November 1661 and March the following year. His journey included calling at Cambridge, where once again Mr Loosemore provided anthems, and on his return, John Brown received two pounds, probably for extracting choir parts from Loosemore's scores.²⁵

18 GB-WOR probate Robert Alderson, 7 March 1667 (WI).

19 The verse was printed posthumously (1721) by Lewis Theobald in *The Grove*.

20 *When Teucer from his father fled* (Z522); *Nestor, who did to thrice man's age attain* (Z503).

21 Published by J. Grundy in about 1790 from Tinker's manuscript.

22 D470 Treasurer's Accounts of B Oley.

23 A73 Receiver General Fabric Repairs, p. 84.

24 A73, p. 55.

25 D511 Treasurer's Accounts by B Oley (loose sheet); D471 Mr Oley's Charge; A29, p.18; Atkins (1918), p. 63.

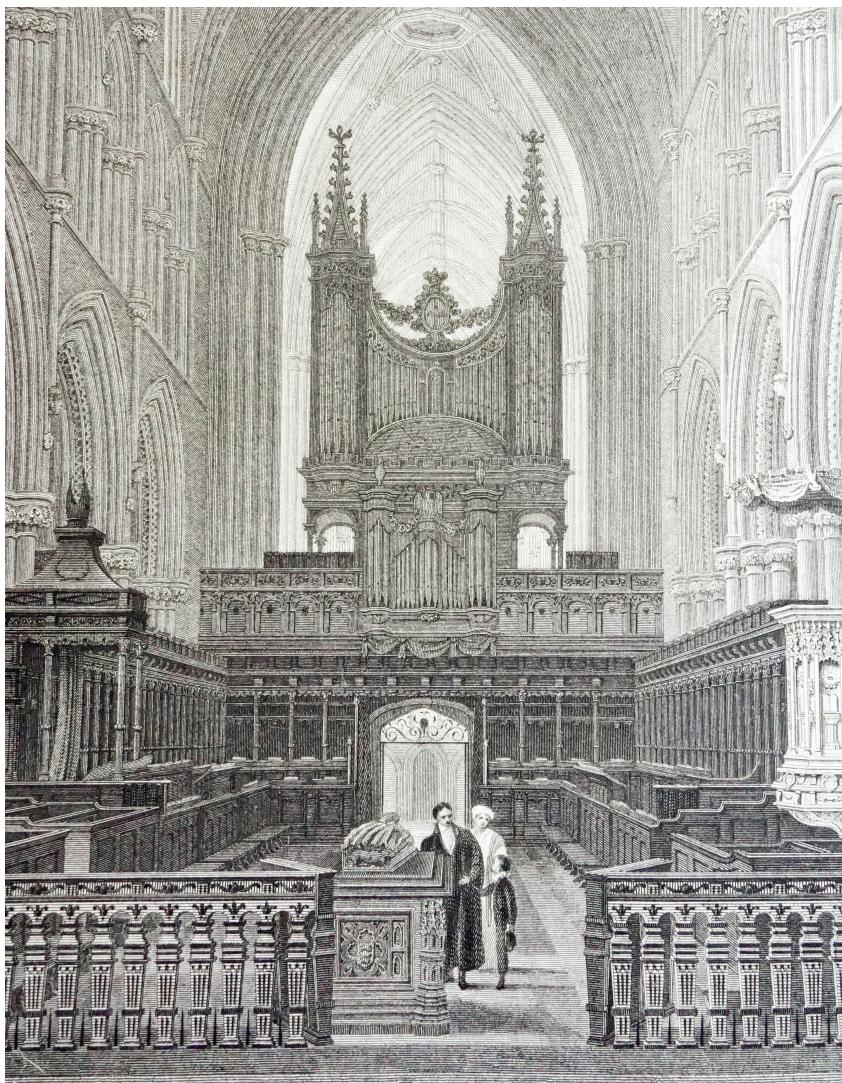


Fig. 25 The cathedral quire in 1823, but appearing much as it would have done from the later 1600s (detail of engraving from Wild (1823), public domain)

Repairing the Quire and Sanctuary

The quire seating also needed attention. The back row of fourteenth-century stalls with their misericords and the Marian canopies, columns, and panelling above them had survived, but the more movable stalls in

front needed replacing. A joiner was sent to Gloucester and Hereford 'to take the demensions of the Stawles & seating before them', and the work was done the following year.²⁶ The joiners' invoice for seventy pounds, paid on September 6th 1661, included just over ninety-one yards of wainscot and nearly eleven yards more for a new bishop's seat. Two joiners charged for just over a month's work by themselves and their men, and amongst other items there was a claim for 'Carvinge that repaired the old worke in the Quire'.²⁷ The next year the same men were paid for making a 'great reading desk' for chanting the Litany in the quire.

Most important was the matter of the Communion table or altar. Should it be of stone, or of marble as in 1635, or of wood? Should it be set altarwise or laid east-west below King John's tomb? And should it be railed? These questions remained contentious, and there was no answer that would please everyone. The bishop and the dean, both newly appointed in 1661, were both moderate churchmen but were happy to follow the king's lead at Whitehall Chapel. They opted for a wooden table, set altarwise with an altar rail. Not all would have approved, but this became the pattern for most cathedrals, and with time it became accepted as the norm.²⁸

The Communion table itself was made rather cheaply in 1661 by the cathedral joiners, but after this expense was not spared.²⁹ The bishop spent twenty pounds of cathedral money on a velvet covering for the table (said to be 'splendid indeed'),³⁰ which was overlaid by a damask cloth.³¹ £106 9s was paid for Communion plate, consisting of a basin (for offerings), two flagons, two gilt cups with covers, and a bread plate; £56 10s for 'Quishions & furniture for the Communion Table & Quire'; and £4 for two fair folio common prayer books for the table, no doubt to rest on the cushions.³² Meanwhile, sawyers cut altar rails, and joiners worked to fashion them for three months, and the following year mats were purchased for Communion, presumably to kneel on at the rail to receive this.³³

26 D408 A bill of worke done.

27 See Chapter Three; D469 Joiner's bill.

28 Fincham and Tyacke (2007), pp. 311, 314.

29 D469, bill paid 6 September 1661.

30 A29, p. 18 (1662). It was later lined with buckram (A27 Treasurer's Book, 1674–5, p. 80).

31 D470 (1661), A26 Treasurer's Book 1662–3, (February 1662 and April 1663).

32 B1869 'Worke made by Robert Alvey'; A73, p. 53.

33 A73, pp. 81–82; A26 (1662–3), p. 77.

There was an attempt to re-establish order and seemliness. A candelabrum was purchased partly at the expense of the dean, probably the eight-branched one that appears in a later inventory and hung above the quire.³⁴ The bishop's seat was provided with a silk-fringed canopy and perfumes; the arms on the organ loft were cleaned, the panels behind painted and varnished; and the king's arms put up in stone with a gold inscription above them.³⁵ Joiners mended the quire pulpit, which was then painted; and locking cupboards were installed, perhaps for books and music.³⁶ In January 1663, twenty-one months after the first sung service, the choristers were provided with gowns to wear under their surplices.³⁷ The aim was clearly to provide a befitting place for a formal liturgy; the altar may have moved away from the Laudian model, but otherwise what was achieved was something close to Laud's ideal of 'beauty in holiness'.

Early Steps with the Choir

It may have been difficult to find suitable Easter music for the fledgling choir at its first sung services. Copies of John Barnard's books had not yet arrived, and no payments had been made for copying music. Six verse anthems by Richard Browne, the man who was training the new choristers, were probably written in the early 1660s, and some of these may have been intended to fill the gap. His setting of Psalm 22, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, a lament starting with this line that had been quoted by Christ from the cross, would have been suitable for Holy Saturday. For Easter Sunday, the anthem *Unto him that hath loved us*, may have been used. It is a celebration of Christ as redeemer, now in 'glory and dominion for ever'. Beginning, somewhat unusually, with a chorus rather than a verse section, it shows Browne's skilful management of imitative entries (see Fig. 26). It is also the single anthem which found its way into the 1664 edition of James Clifford's, predominantly London-sourced, *Divine Services and Anthems*, and so may have been more widely known.³⁸

³⁴ A29, pp. 9, 18; B1874 Inventory 1684.

³⁵ D471; D455d; A73, pp. 53, 57.

³⁶ D465 Joiner's Bill; A26 (1662–3), pp. 66–7.

³⁷ A26, p.77. Surplices were worn over the gowns.

³⁸ Clifford (1664), p. 354.

Browne had been harder hit by the overthrows of the Commonwealth than many. Born in 1619,³⁹ he had risen from a role as gifted chorister to being Tomkins' assistant organist and protégé, then becoming sub-deacon (epistoller), and finally a minor canon with responsibility to rehearse the choristers as deputy to Tomkins. Then, in a single day in July 1646, all this achievement was snatched away. He was consigned to live in poverty with his wife and two young children in three, probably rather dark, rooms of the vault under the monastic dormitory.⁴⁰ The dwelling was not even considered worthy of a rent, as the dormitory roof had been stripped of lead and timber, and the building was on its way to ruin.

His anthems often reflect a preoccupation with the lost fourteen years, which must have been shared by many contemporaries. *The Lord liveth* has a theme of salvation and deliverance by a living Christ. But it also contains the words, 'thou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the violent man', undoubtedly included as a narrative of contemporary experience. Two other anthems also look back, finding a parallel with the Babylonian siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and the texts they use now had a deeper significance. *By the waters of Babylon*, expresses the regret of the exiled Israelites at being unable to sing the Lord's song, and *Have ye no regard*, laments the ruin of Jerusalem with bitterness and sorrow. The words corresponded: the Anglicans had also been expelled, unable to sing their services, and they had also been helpless as the buildings of the cathedral foundation—their Jerusalem—were wrecked. Another anthem, *If the Lord himself*, gives blessings to the Lord for the deliverance of his people from their enemies. This text was often favoured by composers in the belief that it mirrored the resurgence of the Anglican Church: 'the snare is broken and we are delivered'.

The abiding theme of banishment and regret through so many of these anthems seems almost all-consuming. They reflect on experiences that might have overshadowed even a long life, but Richard Browne died prematurely at the age of forty-five in 1664.

³⁹ Thomas (1736), p. 109.

⁴⁰ Marriage to Elizabeth Hoskins, 5 February 1641/2 (Bishop's transcripts, All Saints' Church); Elizabeth baptised 14 March 1642/3, Richard baptised 18 Nov 1644 (St Michael's Church register); Cave and Wilson (1924), p. 176.

Un - to him that hath lo - ved us, that hath
Un - to him that hath lo - ved us, that hath lo - ved us, un - to him
Un - to him
lo - ved us and wash-ed us from our sins, and
that hath lo - ved us, hath lo - ved us, and wash-ed us
that hath lo - ved us, hath lo - ved us and wash-ed us from our
Un - to him that hath lo - ved
wash-ed us from our sins in his own blood in his
from our sins in his own blood, from our sins in his own
us and wash-ed us from our sins in his own

Fig. 26 The start of the opening chorus of Richard Browne's verse anthem *Unto him that hath loved us*⁴¹ (transcribed by the author)

By July 1661, the choir was almost complete and had sung its first services together, but there was still no master of choristers. Perhaps through Nathaniel's advocacy in chapter meetings, the position was granted to another Tomkins. Giles Tomkins was Nathaniel's cousin, a single man aged around twenty-eight who had been brought up in Salisbury, where his father was lay vicar and instructor of the cathedral

⁴¹ From manuscript additions to the Hereford copies of John Barnard's *First Book of Selected Church Musick*, GB-Och Music MSS 544–53.

choristers. He arrived at the end of August but seems to have left about a month later; there is no record of any salary paid him after Michaelmas, and he was not included in *A Perfect Catalogue [...] of Every Particular Member of the Cathedral Church*, compiled in October.⁴² Within the month he gave a hint of his preferred career path when he was ordained deacon in the cathedral, along with six others, by Bishop George Morley.⁴³ Short as it was, Giles Tomkins' tenure included the anniversary celebration of the escape of Charles II following the Battle of Worcester on September 3rd. This date was even more important because of the possibility of a visit by the king on that day.

Charles confirmed in June that he hoped a progress would start after adjournment of Parliament in mid-July, and knowledge of this may have spurred the Dean and Chapter to recover a working organ for the visit.⁴⁴ Negotiations with Dr John Tomkins had already been undertaken, and a payment of forty pounds was made to him for 'the Organs in the Quire'. A further forty marks were given him by Nathaniel Tomkins.⁴⁵ John Tomkins had inherited the lease of Thomas Tomkins' house in College Green. This fact, along with the expression 'the organs in the quire', which should perhaps be interpreted as meaning 'formerly in the quire', suggests this was the Dallam instrument that had been stored in Thomas Tomkins' house during the Commonwealth years. The payment is undated, but its position in the receiver general's accounts suggests spring or summer 1661. In the event, the organ parts were found to have been damaged, and the amount was reduced to £38.⁴⁶ A curious chapter minute from over twenty years later,⁴⁷ 'That the chair Organ be demanded of Dr Tomkins', raises a possibility that in 1661 John Tomkins had been asked to return only those parts of the great organ that he held and had retained the chair organ. The matter is puzzling, as is how John Tomkins came to be in a position to charge both the chapter and Nathaniel Tomkins a substantial fee for the return of the organ. What is clear is that the cathedral did not have an adequate, functioning organ

⁴² A69, p. 84, 28 August 1661; Atkins (1918), p. 67, and A29, p. 1.

⁴³ Atkins (1918), p. 69; A29, p. 9. He was later to become Rector of Martin Husingtree.

⁴⁴ *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 8, 1660–1667* (1802), p. 278, 21 June 1661.

⁴⁵ A125iii Receiver General Accounts, p. 121.

⁴⁶ D508 Money owing to prebendaries; Nathaniel seems to have acted as intermediary, but these accounts are a little difficult to follow.

⁴⁷ A91 Chapter Minutes, 23 June 1684.

by July 1661, and the organ builder George Dallam was called from London in anticipation of the king's visit. Dallam set up a small organ in a newly-built organ loft, and in October a joiner made a music desk for it.⁴⁸

The hope that Charles would come on the anniversary of his escape after the Battle of Worcester was dashed when a message came from Bishop Morley in August, saying that the king intended to arrive before Michaelmas but not as soon as September 3rd. The bishop nevertheless trusted that the day would be marked by a solemn service and sermon,⁴⁹ and it is possible that Richard Browne's anthem, *If the Lord himself had not been on our side*, was written for the occasion. William Child used his own setting of these words at St George's Chapel, Windsor, on the same day.⁵⁰ It is one of Browne's more elaborate anthems, with seven verse sections, three of which include a meane part. In the end, the visit of Charles II did not materialise.

A New Prayer Book

A new *Book of Common Prayer* was issued in 1662 and, with a new ordinal, was annexed to the Act of Uniformity. It was to be used from St Bartholomew's Day (August 24th), by which time holders of livings were to have obtained episcopal ordination or face expulsion from their benefices. James Davenport, who researched the clergy of the Worcester diocese in the early Restoration period, found that there were remarkably few deprivations.⁵¹ Some ministers would have been able to adapt, but Davenport suggested a second possibility. The Worcester bishops may have offered 'conditional ordination', as had happened elsewhere. This would use the formula, 'If thou art not already ordained, I ordain thee', in the belief that valid ordination twice over was not possible. By avoiding asking too many questions, it would have generously accommodated Non-Conformists who may have undergone non-episcopal ordination but were reluctant to lose their benefices.

⁴⁸ A73, p. 54, 1661 (organ and loft); D511, 1661 (boards); D465 (desk).

⁴⁹ D79 Letter of Bishop Morley to B Oley, 13 August 1661.

⁵⁰ A Windsor choir partbook calls Child's anthem 'An Anthem to be sung on the 3rd September for his Majestie's safe deliverance at Worcester' (Mould (1973), p. 38). It had been written in 1641 in thanksgiving for the end of the Irish Rebellion.

⁵¹ Davenport (1929), pp. 124ff.

The 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* had overturned the liturgy at a time when many common people would even have doubted if prayer in the vernacular could be valid. Now, the new 1662 version was more cautious and tried to avoid controversy and conflict. The aim given in the preface was to achieve that which would ‘most tend to the preservation of Peace and Unity in the Church’. There were changes in detail, but Cranmer’s language largely prevailed, the readings of the epistle and gospel were updated to the King James Bible version, and a psalter was added using Miles Coverdale’s translation from the Great Bible of 1538.⁵²

A New Service Scheme

In 1666, Charles II issued revised statutes for the cathedral, which recast the ruling on services, although without radically altering the liturgy from before the wars. A full Communion was only held on the first Sunday of the month; on other days, Ante-Communion would finish with the prayer for the state of Christ’s Church Militant and the collects that followed. A new custom of holding the Litany⁵³ and Holy Communion in the quire and the sermon in the nave did require a small adaptation to accommodate those who wished to leave without taking Communion. Bishop William Thomas, recently translated from St David’s, explained to Archbishop Sancroft how the Ante-Communion was started in the quire as far as the Creed:

Immediately after the Nicene Creede the Whole Congregation removed from the Chore to the Body of the Church, being much more Spatiouſ and better accommodated for gradual distinct ſeatē for both ſexes to be auditors of ſermons. After the ſermon one of the priеſts reads the prayer in the liturgy for the ſtate of Christ’s Church Militant, with the addition of ſome Collects to be ſayd after the Offertory when there is no Comunion (as they are headed or entitled) then the Bishop (if present) diſmises the Asſembly with the ſolemne benediction (the peace of God etc). At the reſeſſe of the grand Congregation they onely who purpoſe to be Communicants returne to the Chore, wherein the prayer for the Church militant the clause therein relating to the Offertory (before omitted) is expreſſly recited.⁵⁴

⁵² Cummings (2011), pp. xlviiff.

⁵³ The Litany was ſung from the desk in the quire by one priеſt and one lay clerk (A76, fol. 118r, 28 November 1681).

⁵⁴ GB-Ob MS Tanner letters 34, fol. 251, Letter of Bishop Thomas to Archbishop

Thomas agreed to 'certifye this irregularity' to the Dean and Chapter to have it altered, but having himself been Dean of Worcester until the previous year, he was aware that any change would be unpopular in the city.

Sermons on Sunday afternoons continued at the west end as before the wars, with minor canons sharing the duty of preaching at first.⁵⁵ Repairs had been found necessary to the seating, and Valentine Green, writing in 1796, described the layout at this end of the cathedral as it had been before it was cleared at mid-century.⁵⁶ A stone bench covered with blue arras for the chief citizens lay below the west window. Against the second pillars from the west, were the bishop's seat on the south and a pulpit on the north. The prebendaries sat on another stone bench with arras covering near the bishop. Green writes that the organ was on the south, but here he is in error, as a carpenter was paid for making the 'little organ gallery' in the north aisle rather than the south in 1667. This position is confirmed by Celia Fiennes, who visited the cathedral some years later and wrote, 'Just against ye pulpit in ye body of the Church is a Little organ to set the Psalme'.⁵⁷ Thus the organ may have stood opposite the cathedral clergy, with the congregation facing east. The city corporation continued to attend, employing a man to lay out mats and cushions.⁵⁸ At the same time, the lecture at St Swithun's seems to have continued for a few years, and Thomas Vicaridge was paid an annual allowance for the 'lecturer's diet' there until 1665. Eventually congregations at the Sunday afternoon sermon dwindled, and in 1685 it was considered by the high church dean, George Hickes, and his chapter that it would be more appropriate for the people to attend their parish churches. The service was discontinued, and the west-end seating used only for the early Matins on weekdays.⁵⁹

Sancroft 28 January 1683/4.

55 A29, p. 10; D511; D471.

56 Repairs: A26, 1662–3, pp. 66, 67; Green (1796), vol. 1, p. 141.

57 A26, 1666–7, p. 25, 12 January; Griffiths (1888), p. 196.

58 GB-WOr Audit of City Accounts (1640–69), 496.5 BA9360/A10/Box 3/2. These payments were distinct from those for setting cushions in the quire.

59 A76 Chapter Acts, fol. 137r, 25 November 1685.

Installing a New Organ

The task of arranging for a new organ to be installed at the Restoration fell on Dean Thomas Warmstry, who unfortunately, in the words of Bishop Robert Skinner, had ‘no more skill in an organ than a beast that hath no understanding’.⁶⁰ Nathaniel Tomkins was the one member of chapter most able to advise him, but there was a marked antagonism between the two men. Tomkins avoided services when the dean was likely to be present and spent most of his time in London.⁶¹ Without Nathaniel Tomkins’ support and perhaps without much consultation with the cathedral musicians, Dean Warmstry began negotiations with one William Hathaway. Hathaway arrived in June 1663⁶² with a reference from Christopher Gibbons, organist of Westminster Abbey, which had been written a few days before:

Reverend Sir,

as I have formerly presented Mr Hathaway an Organ-maker to you,
soe you may be confident thatt he is a very honest man; & fitt for that
purpose. if security be required; I and Mr Locke ye Queenes-Organist
wilbe bound for him. Thus I take leave & rest

Your most obliged & humble servant,

Christo: Gibbons⁶³

London June 22th 1663

As soone as ye Anthems w^{ch} I promised you are faire & well-prickt you
shalbe certaine of them.

He seems to have started work without any contract or written agreement, was paid £110, and by March 1664 had set up the chair organ. Then an acrimonious dispute broke out. His work was held to be inadequate, and the matter was documented in a dossier produced to defend the dean against a complaint made later by Hathaway. The letters taken as a whole convey the indignation and dissatisfaction more strongly than the details of how Hathaway’s chair organ failed. However, the specific

60 GB-Ob Tanner MS 45, fol. 19r, Letter of Bishop Skinner to Archbishop Sheldon, 5 August 1665.

61 D222 ‘Dean Warmstry proceedings against G Yardley a Lay Clerk and Mr Tomkins a Canon’.

62 A26, 1663, p. 77.

63 GB-Ob Add MS C304a, Dossier regarding Hathaway organ fol. 143r.

points raised were that three stops were useless, the workmanship was poor, the organ was not tuned to 'Cathedral Pitch', and it had 'neither shape nor Modell of a double organ'. Nathaniel Tomkins was also concerned that there were 'many poore cheap wooden stops',⁶⁴ and there were mutterings that Christopher Gibbons had been bribed to give the testimonial. Hathaway was dismissed, following which he made an appeal to the Council Board of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The dossier on the Hathaway organ was not presented to Archbishop Sheldon until August 1665. At the least, the incident had delayed the reinstatement of a worthy organ in the cathedral. By the autumn Dean Warmestry had died, and it was left to his successor to take matters further with another organ builder.

The new organ builder was Thomas Harris, and this time there was more care about documenting an agreement. The contract was detailed and included the required stoplist and pipework, a description of the great and chair cases (but on the east side only), and a schedule of work and payments.⁶⁵ The plan was clearly to recreate something very like Thomas Dallam's instrument of 1613. An old description of the Dallam instrument was even used as a starting point, with the addition of the comment 'July 2 1666 Add in ye new organ An open Diapason of wood leaveing out nine of ye Basses', which was inserted after the chair stops.⁶⁶ In the end this was to be the only significant change apart from a spare slider on the great organ. The stop had been described in the contract as 'one open diapason of wood, having nine pipes towards the bases beginning in A re', and the expression 'leaveing out nine of ye Basses' (i.e., omitting CC to G#) indicates that the lowest note of the organ, as in the Dallam instrument, was CC. The contract also specified that this was a pipe ten feet in length; therefore, the organ was at the low pitch like Thomas Dallam's and a 'transposing' one as his was.⁶⁷

64 The stoplist is unknown: the documents reveal only that there were to be a stopped diapason, flute and recorder on the great organ.

65 A76, fol. 42r, 23 June 1666; A7(xvi) Register, fol. 25.

66 D248 Organ description and benefactors; Butcher (1981).

67 A7xvi Register, fol. 25. See Johnstone (2003) regarding transposing organs.



Fig. 27 Thomas Harris's chair organ case, now at Mistley (photo by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Harris started work in early July 1666 with the chair organ. He had been allocated a room in the College Gateway (now called the Edgar Tower), which he probably used as a workshop.⁶⁸ For the case, Harris had been asked to follow the design of the Windsor organ 'before the wars', the appearance of which is now unknown.⁶⁹ The Worcester chair case (but not its pipes) still survives at the Church of St Mary and St Michael,

68 A26 Treasurer's Book 1666–7, pp. 27, 28 (x3); A26 (1668–9), p. 69.

69 Illustrations of the 1660–61 Robert Dallam instrument do survive (Bicknell (1996), p. 106 and GB-Ob MS Ashmole 1131, fols 186v–187r) but this seems to have been a new case. The organ by Emanuel Cresswell of 1637 may possibly have used the case of Thomas Dallam's organ of 1609 (Hope (1913), pp. 447ff).

Mistley, Essex, to where it was moved when the screen organ was dismantled in the 1860s (Fig. 27).⁷⁰ The original contract (apparently in imitation of the Windsor organ) required ‘a cherub expanding its wings so as to returne downe perpendicular’,⁷¹ and the tips of the wing feathers are visible covering the pipe tops. At Mistley, the cherub has been replaced by a pelican in her piety.

Arthur Hill, senior partner of the Hill firm from 1893 (son of Thomas Hill, who built the transept organ), recalled two other features of the chair case. The smaller pipes were decorated with a single punched-out projection or nailhead immediately over the apex of the mouth or leaf, and some pipes were painted. He wrote, ‘The paintings were badly executed, but had a good effect. One of these pipes is in the author’s possession, and the figure is that of King David, crowned, and with a harp’.⁷²

The organ that resulted was as traditional and retrospective as it could have been. Despite organ builders returning from the Continent with new design concepts, most new cathedral organs were distinctly unadventurous, but at Worcester Nathaniel Tomkins had a strong influence on chapter decisions. He was a man in his sixties, immersed in a project to publish his father’s church music, and perhaps the least likely to be musically forward-looking and progressive.

The Choir and Its Music

On the departure of Giles Tomkins, Richard Browne may have seemed a clear choice to follow him; he did so, but for only two years, and his death in 1664 again left the cathedral without an organist and master of choristers. Another of Tomkins’ former choristers, Richard Davis, was chosen.⁷³ Davis was some years younger than Browne, but both had been taught as children by Thomas Taylor, a former school usher (assistant master), who had now taken over the precentor’s duties in the absence of Philip Tinker in London.

70 *Musical Standard*, 16 (1879), 5.

71 A7xvi, fol. 25.

72 Hill (1883), p. 26. The date of their painting is unknown.

73 A69 Installations Register, 14 December 1664.

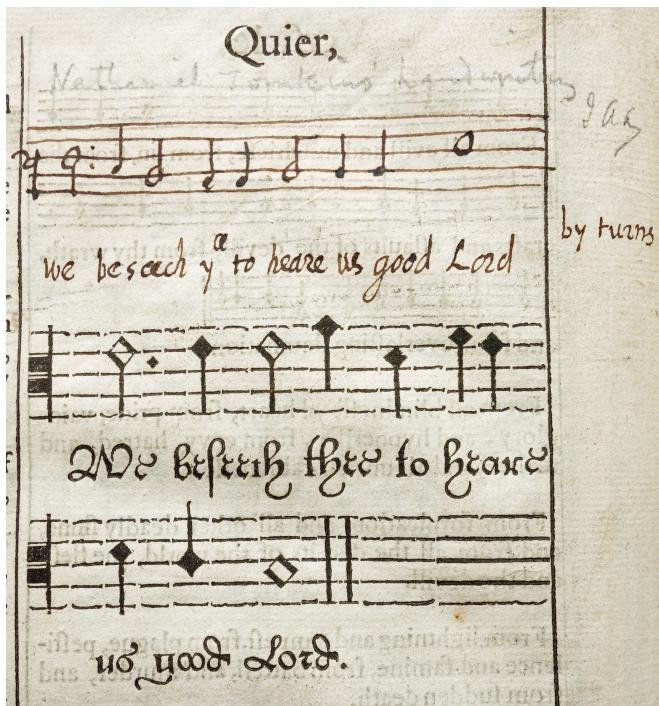


Fig. 28 Nathaniel Tomkins' amendments to the Tallis Litany. Ivor Atkins has added a pencil annotation. (A 7.11, fol. 89v, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

John Barnard's books, having been purchased in 1661, were probably pressed into use in the choir stalls fairly soon, and some choristers' graffiti in them is dated two years later.⁷⁴ At some time after their arrival, they were annotated by Nathaniel Tomkins (Fig. 28). Barnard transmits the five-part version of the Tallis Litany, and Andrew Johnstone has observed that in repeated invocations, the two contratenor parts switch music for each repeat. For some reason however, Barnard's treatment of this is inconsistent.⁷⁵ Tomkins extended the alternation to two invocations that Barnard had not treated this way: *Good Lord deliver us* and *We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord*. The exchange was no doubt intended to produce some relief from the monotony of their repeats, although the effect would have been rather subtle in performance.

74 A7.13 Barnard's Contratenor decani primus book, chorister graffiti, dated 1663.

75 Johnstone (2016), p. 225.

Apart from other amendments to the Barnard books, Nathaniel Tomkins contributed to Worcester's musical repertoire by copying William Byrd's anthem, *Exalt thyself O God*. His score of this, despite missing the first page, has meant that an otherwise lost work by Byrd can be reconstructed.⁷⁶ It must have been copied after 1662, as it uses the prayer book translation of Psalm 108 rather than the Geneva Bible one originally intended by Byrd. It is now at the start of a tenor partbook, where it is followed by the tenor part written out by itself, and this fact and the substituted text suggest that Tomkins hoped it would be performed.⁷⁷

Nathaniel published his father's choral music as *Musica Deo Sacra* in 1668, and it was advertised as being 'in ten bookees whereof one is the organ part. They are to be had at the Chaunters house of Westminster'. The Westminster Abbey chanter was the Worcester minor canon, Philip Tinker, and he or Nathaniel Tomkins may have taken copies to Worcester.⁷⁸ There is no record of a payment, but in 1670 an entry, 'Binding M^r Tomkins books & adding paper 01-07-06', may refer to them.⁷⁹ The cathedral library holds five copies of *Musica Deo Sacra*, one of which (a medius copy) was donated in 1987 and is of unknown provenance. Three have the cathedral arms embossed and gilded on the cover and are likely to be original Worcester copies in their contemporary bindings. They have been well-used. The final copy (a bassus one) has no crest and no markings inside that help to indicate where it belonged.⁸⁰

Restoration Worcester was notable for the number of local composers that followed Richard Browne's lead in composing for the cathedral services. One was Richard Davis, who wrote ten anthems and also settings of the canticles for Morning and Evening Prayers in C. His music was used at Gloucester and Hereford as well as Worcester, and had been introduced at Ely by one of his former choristers, but otherwise was probably unknown. All ten of Davis' anthems are psalm settings in verse format, and *Thou O God* seems to have been the most widely sung. His style is straightforward and lighter in spirit than that of Richard Browne (Fig. 29).

⁷⁶ Edited by Craig Monson in the Byrd Edition, published by Stainer and Bell.

⁷⁷ A3.3 Tenor cantoris partbook.

⁷⁸ GB-Lna State Papers 29/107, fol. 209. Tinker preferred to spell his name Tynchare at this time.

⁷⁹ A27 Treasurer's Book 1669–70.

⁸⁰ Three further volumes of *Musica Deo Sacra* have been missing from the cathedral library since 1978. They are A7.15 Contratenor book, A7.17 Tenor book, and A7.18 Tenor book.

Meane The folds shall be full of sheep, the val - leys al -
 The folds shall be full of sheep, the
 Tenor The folds shall be full of sheep, the val - leys al - so, the
 Bass The folds shall be full of sheep, the val - leys al - so, the
 Organ so, the val - leys al - so shall stand so thick with
 val - leys al - so shall stand so thick, so thick with
 val - leys al - so shall stand so thick with corn that
 corn that they shall laugh and sing.
 corn that they shall laugh and sing.
 they shall laugh and sing, shall laugh and sing.

Fig. 29 The end of the fourth verse section of Richard Davis' *Thou O God*
(transcribed by the author)⁸¹

81 Reconstructed from GB-GL Music MS CM011, GB-Och Music MS 550, 553. The meane part does not survive but is here taken from the organ part. Ian Cheverton has transcribed the complete anthem in Cheverton (1984), vol. 4, p. 164.

Another local composer was James Hawkins, a Worcester chorister under Richard Davis.⁸² His anthem, *Lord thou hast been our refuge*, is annotated 'J: Hawkins: made for B^{pp} ffleetwood ffunerall Anthem'.⁸³ This funeral was in 1683, by which time Hawkins had left Worcester and had been appointed organist and master of the choristers at Ely Cathedral, and it is possible that Richard Davis commissioned his former chorister to write for this important occasion.

Some indication of the music sung at a funeral is given by an annotation in the organ part of the Worcester copies of Tomkins' *Musica Deo Sacra*. It is in the hand of Richard Davis and is written next to Tomkins' setting of the funeral sentences:

This [i.e., *I am the resurrection* by Thomas Tomkins]

When ye Corps is placd in ye Quire

For ye Anth^m: *O Lord I bow*

Before ye interm^t *I call & cry*

Behold it is for after⁸⁴

Specifying when each anthem was to be sung seems to imply that all were to be included; they were not just alternatives. The funeral, therefore, must have been an important one. Probably the most significant funerals in Davis' time were those of three bishops: Robert Skinner in 1670, Walter Blandford in 1673, and James Fleetwood in 1683. If it was for one of these occasions, Tomkins' burial sentence would have accompanied the arrival of the coffin in the quire; in the case of Bishop Fleetwood, Hawkins' setting of one of the psalms specified by the 1662 prayer book would have been sung on the coffin's arrival; *O Lord I bow at the knees*

82 A27 Treasurer's Book, lists of choristers 1671–4.

83 A3.3, p. 70, anthems end.

84 A7.21 *Musica Deo Sacra, pars organica*, pp. 94–5. Davis' hand is characteristically variable both for text and music. His formation of letters, the slant of text and the stems of notes all fluctuate. The flourish of capital B's here is the same as in A3.4, p. 58, anthem end, and A3.3, p. 71, anthem end (both happen to be copied a page or so after Hawkins' *Lord, thou hast been*), and he writes the same flourish for a P on A3.4, p. 59, anthem end, and for the R of his own initials on A3.3, p. 24, anthem end. The italics here are editorial.

of my heart would have preceded or followed the lesson; and then *I call and cry* and *Behold it is Christ* would have been sung before and after the interment, which in all three cases was in the Lady Chapel.

The three funeral anthems seem likely to be the five-part, full anthems by William Mundy, Thomas Tallis and Edmund Hooper, respectively, all of which are found in John Barnard's collection. They are also the only settings of these words copied into the surviving partbooks. All three were no doubt repertoire anthems, a necessity as the time to prepare the music would have been limited. Other evidence for the choir repertoire of this time comes from a list written on the flyleaf of one of the original Worcester copies of John Barnard's publication, first identified by Ian Cheverton.⁸⁵ Once again, this is almost certainly in the hand of the organist, Richard Davis, with services listed on the left and anthems on the right, by key. The anthems are given without composers' names, but these can be recovered, as keys, and page references where given, usually correspond with those in John Barnard's book. Most of the anthems (twenty-three of a total of twenty-nine) are taken from Barnard, and just over half of the services come from either Barnard or from Tomkins' recently-published *Musica Deo Sacra*. Benjamin Rogers' name appears as both Mr Rogers and Dr Rogers which helps date the list as being from 1669 or later, as he was awarded his Oxford Mus.D. in July of that year.

A	D ^r Childs evening service} w ^t M ^r Tomkins 3 ^d service }verses	[Tye] Sing unto y ^e Lord [Batten] Hide not thou y ⁱ face O Give thanks. D ^r Giles
B	M ^r Kings evening service w th an Anthem	
C	M ^r Tomkins	[Gibbons] Hosanna 122 [Gibbons] Lift up y ^r heads O Ld grant y ^e King – M ^r Weekes 121 [Byrd] Sing Joyfully 120

85 A7.13 Barnard Contratenor decani primus parbook; Cheverton (1984), vol. 2, p. 440.

D	D ^r Childs M ^r Tomkins 2 ^d M ^r Tallis M ^r Bird M ^r Strogers M ^r Mundyes M ^r Bevins M ^r Rogers short service M ^r Gibbons vers service M ^r Tomkins 4 th service w th verses	[Tallis] Blessed be thy name O God 103 [Byrd] Prevent us [Farrant] Call to remembrance 100 [Hooper] Teach me thy way 99 [Batten] O praise y ^e Ld all ye Heathen 103 [Mundy] O Ld y ^e maker 101 [Byrd] O God whom o ^r offences 115 Behold now praise y ^e Lord [Farrant] Hide not thou thy 99
E	D ^r Childs vers service	O pray for y ^e peace [Hooper] Behold it is X ^t 113 Save me O God
F	D ^r Childs M ^r Gibbons M ^r Parsons	[Byrd] Ne Irascaris & 2 ^d p ^{te} [Gibbons] Allmighty & everlasting God 103 O Ld grant y ^e King D ^r Childs [Parsons] Deliver me from mine Enemies [Byrd] O Ld make y ⁱ serv ^t Charles 116 O praise God in his holines
G	D ^r Childs Benedicite M ^r Patricks M ^r Weelks D ^r Rogers vers service M ^r Tomkins 5 ^t service w th verses	[Tallis] I call & cry 110 [Mundy] O Ld I bow y ^e Knees [Batten] Ld we beseech thee 104 O Give thanks – Mr Tucker

Table 2 List of repertoire on the flyleaf of A7.13. The first column gives the letter of the key for each section

It seems quite likely that this list represents the choir's repertoire—or Richard Davis' planned repertoire for it—during the 1670s and perhaps until the mid 1680s, when there was an influx of new music. In date, it may correspond with a scramble to acquire missing organ parts for the John Barnard repertoire in 1669; it would have been useful to know which works needed copying. To supplement parts that had been written in the previously-purchased organ book, a local stationer, John Jones, supplied a further one in November of that year, which must have been a substantial volume as it cost the high price of £1 15s. A few days later Nathaniel Tomkins authorised a payment to the minor canon John Sayer for bringing organ parts from London, and Richard Davis immediately started the copying by 'pricking 25 sheetes in ye great organ book'. Davis also arranged for an organ book, presumably this one, to be bound in velum a few years later; it is a pity it no longer survives.⁸⁶

The heavy reliance on repertoire drawn from John Barnard's books suggests that little manuscript music from the pre-war years was available. Possibly the service setting by Nathaniel Pattrick and the anthem by Nathaniel Giles may have survived the war, as may have some of the service settings and the anthems that remain unattributed, but these represent a minority. The list was in general as retrospective as the Harris organ, which was completed at about the same time. None of the composers whose music was handed down by John Barnard had been alive at the time he published it some thirty years earlier, and Davis' list adds no more than a salting of contemporary music.

New Choir Music in the 1680s

The choir repertoire altered quite significantly in the 1680s. Five seventeenth-century manuscript partbooks still remain in the cathedral library and give some idea of these changes. The bass partbook is particularly large, with over seven hundred pages.⁸⁷ The main copyist, responsible for over three hundred items, can be identified as Roger Fosbrooke, junior (chorister 1661–c.3, lay clerk 1669–1715), who received payments in 1684 and 1685 for some of this work.⁸⁸ His signature matches

⁸⁶ A26 (1668–9), pp. 59, 71; A27 (1673–4), p. 42.

⁸⁷ A3.1 Bass partbook.

⁸⁸ A27 (1684–5), fol. 13r.

the clear and legible text in the partbook.

Many of the partbooks have been assembled piecemeal, but most of the anthem end of the contratenor book, again copied by Roger Fosbrooke, may retain its original form.⁸⁹ Clues in the manuscript point to the anthems being copied in the years 1683–4, and those chosen give some idea of how the repertoire was updated at this time.⁹⁰ There are anthems by the local composers Richard Browne, John Badger, James Hawkins, and Richard Davis, and several by Henry Hall from Hereford, but otherwise they are mostly from the Restoration Chapel Royal. Composers include Michael Wise, John Blow, William Child, Pelham Humfrey, Henry Purcell, and Jeremiah Clarke. The single anthem by Purcell, *Hear my prayer O God*, only survives in provincial cathedral books, and Shay and Thompson have commented that its appearance here is an early example of the use of a Purcell anthem outside London.⁹¹ Other dates in the partbooks also suggest there was a copying campaign in the mid-1680s, and this is supported by entries in the treasurers' accounts.⁹²

Finding a Replacement for Richard Davis

From Christmas 1686 a young organist called Vaughan Richardson was employed as a deputy to Richard Davis, and it has been suggested that this was because Davis was infirm.⁹³ Vaughan Richardson was at the start of his career; only the previous year he had been one of the children of the Chapel Royal singing at the coronation of James II, and later he was to become organist of Winchester Cathedral. His time at Worcester may not have been his happiest. There were disciplinary problems with the choristers; the senior one slandered the sexton, Edward Powis, calling him 'Hudibrasse', the Presbyterian laughingstock of a satirical poem by Samuel Butler. He also provoked him with the expression 'Oliver's Trooper' before locking the unhappy man in the vestry. This

⁸⁹ A3.2 Contratenor decani partbook.

⁹⁰ A3.2, p. 53. Hawkin's anthem for Bishop Fleetwood's funeral in 1683, p. 66, *Hitherto allowed by Mr Battle, treasurer* (Ralph Battle was treasurer in 1681, 1683 and 1694); p. 129, *pd hither Decr 84.*

⁹¹ Shay and Thompson (2000), p. 230.

⁹² A27, 21 July 1685; 26 November 1685; A30 Treasurer's Book 1685–6, fol. 28r.

⁹³ Shaw (1991), p. 307.

was not the only troubling incident. A few months earlier, Richardson had himself been set upon by a local tailor who called him to his house and inflicted ‘greevious blowes with a greate cane’, so that Richardson was ‘in feare of his life & forced to crye out’.⁹⁴ The reason for this assault is not known. Finally, perhaps adding insult to injury, when Richard Davis died in 1688 and a replacement was needed, Vaughan Richardson was passed over in favour of another former Chapel Royal chorister, a decision which in time the Dean and Chapter may have come to regret.

The man the chapter chose instead was Richard Cherington, and Watkins Shaw identified him with a Chapel Royal chorister who served under John Blow, and made his way into the records because he broke a leg in 1677.⁹⁵ He was probably a similar age to Vaughan Richardson, and later was the subject of an offensive lampoon which compared him with an ape and referred to the ‘fine tricks he plays’.⁹⁶ Similarly abusive comments by choristers, scribbled on the flyleaves of the *pars organica* of *Musica Deo Sacra*, suggest he failed to command the respect needed for teaching. He was accused at bishop’s visitations of ‘unnecessary frequenting public houses and company keeping’, and of negligence in teaching the choristers. Regarding the latter the chapter entered the plea, ‘we have used endeavours to have ‘em better taught by other persons, but hitherto with little success’.⁹⁷

For a couple of years, some of Cherington’s pay was diverted to two lay clerks, John Thatcher and William Davis. Both deputised with the teaching at various times, and William Davis also played the organ for part of 1697.⁹⁸ Relations were strained. Cherington and Thatcher came to blows, and both were excommunicated by the Chancellor of the Diocese for brawling and fighting in the cathedral and churchyard.⁹⁹ There were

⁹⁴ Papers of Thomas Vernon GB-WOR 779.1 BA2057, dated 30 July 1688 (but referring to the week before Christmas 1687) and 6 September 1687. Dr Pat Hughes kindly provided the second reference. She has identified the assailant, Thomas Cobb, as a tailor who dealt with the gentry and who lived at 9 College Precincts, Worcester.

⁹⁵ Shaw (1991), p. 307; Ashbee (1986–96), vol. 1, p. 176.

⁹⁶ GB-WOR 705:134 BA1531/40i, Lechmere Archives notebook. A Worcester Consistory Court record gives Cherington’s age as thirty-nine in 1706 (GB-WOR 797.6 BA2642, box 1).

⁹⁷ A76 Chapter Acts, episcopal visitations in 1692 (answer 10) and 1695 (answer 3).

⁹⁸ A32 Treasurer’s Book 1695–6, fol. 15r; A33 Treasurer’s Book 1696–7, pp. 9, 15.

⁹⁹ A76, 8 October 1697; GB-WOR Consistory Court records 795.02 BA 2302/box 57/ item 11444.

echoes of the old ordinance for the Reconciliation of Penitents when, after seven weeks, they were required to stand on the step of the Litany desk in the centre of the quire from the reading of the Epistle until the Creed and then to publicly admit their offence and seek absolution.

Updating the Organ

The influx of new Chapel Royal music must have made the conservative Harris organ appear outdated. The use of different pitches for the choir and the organ had become obsolete, and new sonorities were becoming accepted. At the cathedrals of Durham, Canterbury, Gloucester, Norwich and Winchester new instruments were being built in the 1680s and 1690s, many of them by Bernard Smith, who had come to England from the Netherlands.¹⁰⁰ After the Harris family had ceased involvement at Worcester, the organ was cared for by a Mr Heywood (probably Robert Hayward of Bath) until the mid 1680s,¹⁰¹ but from then on Bernard Smith took over. It is notable that two linked, early nineteenth-century accounts of the organ state that it was 'said to have been built by Father Schmidt', and also the organ builder Arthur Hill in 1883 called it 'Smith's instrument at Worcester Cathedral'.¹⁰² Fees paid Smith in 1686 and 1687 totalled just over a hundred and twenty-four pounds, but the accounts for the next two years are missing, and there may have been further instalments.¹⁰³ It is quite conceivable that he raised the pitch and replaced some of the doubled ranks with new stops. He may also have added a mounted cornet, but unfortunately no contract or details of the work undertaken survive.

Anxiety at a Growing Catholic Threat

In 1688 the country was unsettled by widespread discontent as James II steered the nation towards Roman Catholicism. In Worcester, the Catholic high sheriff, Sir Walter Blount, enlisted the minor canon Daniel

¹⁰⁰ Bicknell (1996), p. 117.

¹⁰¹ A27 Treasurer's Book, 22 November 1679; 25 November 1679; 1682; 30 November 1685.

¹⁰² The early nineteenth-century accounts are the Leffler manuscript and *Organographia* (see Thistleton-Wade (1977); Hill (1883), p. 25).

¹⁰³ A27, 23 November 1686; 4 November 1687; 22 November 1687.

Kenrick to give the cathedral sermon at the Lent Assizes. The choice of speaker had clearly been made with some care. Kenrick's views on current affairs promised Sir Walter's idea of a good sermon, and the preaching was to be before the entire city corporation as well as the cathedral clergy. On the day, Kenrick did not disappoint. He spoke in favour of religious and political tolerance of Catholics; he approved of attempts by James II to repeal the Test Act requiring denial of the doctrine of transubstantiation before holding public office; and he argued against the Penal Laws for Dissenters. He reasoned carefully, from the point of view of an Anglican clergyman, albeit perhaps a Jacobite one, but these issues were hotly controversial at a sensitive time. Kenrick was met with a blast of disapproval, and he wrote ingenuously and with indignation of his surprise at 'the Rude Insolence ev'n of my Brethren and those of my own Communion towards me upon my preaching of this'.¹⁰⁴

The cathedral was a seat of controversy again later in the year. William of Orange landed at Torbay on November 5th, but James II, having been forewarned of this possibility some months before, had planned defences, and the outcome was in the balance. A wave of anti-Catholicism was engulfing the country, and a party of nine hundred horsemen was advancing towards Worcester, wrecking mass-houses on the way. At this moment of tension, the lay clerk Richard Browne, son of the former organist, made a blunder which sent ripples across the city. The sub-dean rushed a letter to Whitehall to reassure the king:

Nov 28th, 1688

There has a thing happened here which has filled the whole town with talk, and I believe it will fly up even to you. Yesterday, in our cathedral at the reading of the Litany (which we read every day), there was a mistake made, and one Richard Browne, a lay clerk, read instead of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, his Royal Highness the Prince of Orange, which occasioned the dean and myself to send for him before us to give an account of his misreading; the poor man, I am confident, had no design in doing it, for he has since taken his oath before a justice of peace that it was a mere mistake; but however, not knowing how far such a rumour might be disserviceable and displeasing to the King, we have endeavoured all we [can] to stop people's mouths about it.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Kenrick (1688), Epistle Dedicatory.

¹⁰⁵ Historic Manuscripts Commission (1879), part 1, p. 419.

In December, William of Orange entered London with widespread English support, and James II fled to France. This Glorious (and almost bloodless) Revolution and the events that followed proved a watershed for the Church as well as the country. Particularly significant was the Toleration Act of the next year, and this has been discussed by Alice Soulieux-Evans.¹⁰⁶ The act allowed freedom of worship for Non-Conformists (but not Roman Catholics), and this change had some advantages for cathedrals. Any pressure to become more inclusive in order to attract Dissidents back to the Church of England was removed. Cathedrals also came to be seen as providing a form of worship which was distinct from that of parish churches, thus relieving them of the role of leading by example as 'mother-church' of the diocese.

The Non-Jurors and the Men Who Replaced Them

The Toleration Act produced no immediate change in the cathedral services at Worcester, but the requirement to take an oath of allegiance to the new monarchs, thus violating the oath to the previous king, brought sweeping change to the clergy. Both Worcester's bishop and dean were so-called 'non-jurors', as were three of the minor canons.¹⁰⁷ Refusing to swear allegiance meant ejection from the church by Parliament, and across the nation non-jurors, mainly high churchmen who had refused the oath for varying reasons, found unity in their shared rejection of such meddling by civic authorities, particularly when it involved the episcopal bench.

Bishop William Thomas died after years of ill health before he could be ousted, but the remainder were forced to go. Dean George Hickes fixed a protest and claim of right at the quire entrance before he left. The new bishop, Edward Stillingfleet, and the dean, William Talbot, were both Latitudinarians (low churchmen), and yet both were happy for services to continue without adaptation. In fact William Gibson, in an article on William Talbot, has suggested the labels 'low' and 'high' churchman should be used with care about this period because many clergy of the time were able to embrace both high and low church principles.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Soulieux-Evans (2019).

¹⁰⁷ The minor canons were John Griffith, Thomas Roberts, and Thomas Maurice.

¹⁰⁸ Gibson (2007).

Stillingfleet supported the work of the choir. He believed that cathedral services should differ from those in parish churches because, ‘in the Cathedral services the magnificence of the place, the order & solemnity of the service, the praising of God both with vocal and instrumental music, are great instances of that reverence which we owe to God’.¹⁰⁹

In the closing decades of the century, Worcester Cathedral moved towards an increased frequency of some prayer book rites, and protocols that were a little more dignified. Communion services were held weekly rather than monthly from 1683, responding to a call by Archbishop William Sancroft, who campaigned for closer observance of the prayer book rubric.¹¹⁰ The Litany, formerly sung only on Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays after Morning Prayers, was by 1688 sung daily,¹¹¹ and by the end of the century, lay clerks, minor canons and choristers were expected to be ready for services in gowns and surplices before the quire door. There they could await the arrival of the dean and canons so that all could enter together, formally. Men of the choir were to wear falling bands as ministers did, rather than cravats, and also apparel ‘of grave colour and agreeable to their office’.¹¹² Bishop Blandford (1671–5) had provided two tapestries to hang behind the altar, which after his death the chapter purchased from his executors,¹¹³ and two large altar candlesticks were bought.¹¹⁴ To further improve the area around the altar, men worked between May and September 1675 repairing the altar steps and floor and then oiling them to bring out the colour of the stone.¹¹⁵ On top of these enhancements to the sanctuary and to choir customs, more was being expected of the congregation: the later writings of George Hickes (dean 1683–91) indicate that he expected all to stand for the psalm and anthem and to bow to God before his holy altar.¹¹⁶

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¹⁰⁹ Stillingfleet’s primary visitation of 1692, Dr Williams’s Library, London, MS 201.39, pp. 16–17, quoted here from Soulieux-Evans (2019), p. 132.

¹¹⁰ Ornsby (1861), p. 174, no. XVI.

¹¹¹ Historic Manuscripts Commission (1879), part 1, p. 419.

¹¹² Bishop’s Visitation, 1702 (GB-WOr BA 3946).

¹¹³ A27 Treasurer’s Book 1680–1, p. 23.

¹¹⁴ A34 Treasurer’s Book, 25 November 1699.

¹¹⁵ A27 (1674–5), p. 25.

¹¹⁶ Birchley (1700), preface.

By the time of Queen Anne's accession in 1702, the Church of England had defended itself successfully against pressure both from the Catholic James II and from the Calvinist Presbyterian William of Orange. With the Act of Toleration, cathedrals had found a new sense of purpose, albeit with the loss of some political influence by shedding their role as 'mother church' to the diocese. They were no longer troubled by the heckling and persistent challenge of Dissenters, who could now hold their own meetings in licensed preaching houses. After the replacement of the non-jurors, the senior Worcester clergy were not only distinguished and gifted men but also broadminded, liberal Latitudinarians who, while aiming to avoid religious controversy, were happy to encourage a seemly and befitting ceremonial. The cathedral was coming to be seen as comfortable and respectable, and early in the next century this was to lead it to minister more and more to the gentry of the city and county.

7. A New Prosperity and More Settled Cathedral Liturgy (1700–40)

In the eighteenth century, Worcester developed into a stylish regional capital. Travellers commented on the excellent paving, the neat modern houses, and the long main street leading from the cathedral to the new residential area beyond the Foregate.¹ A music festival was founded in about 1715, rotating between the cities of Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford. A new guildhall was erected in the 1720s, soon launching a coffee house in its south wing.² And there were other signs of economic growth: a local newspaper was printed from 1709; racing started on Pitchcroft nine years later; and concerts, balls, public breakfasts, and later, a porcelain manufactory, were added signs of urban renewal. For a Worcester citizen, there was much to be inspired by and much to be proud of.

Occasional Conformity

The cathedral continued to play an important part in the life of the city. Religion and politics were closely bound, and although Dissenters now had freedom to worship in Non-Conformist chapels or meeting houses, they were still prevented from holding civic or national office by the Test Acts, which demanded that those in such positions should receive Holy Communion according to the Church of England. This requirement was often circumvented by what was known as ‘occasional

1 Macky (1724); Walters (1935); Walpole (1784).

2 Hughes and Leech (2011), pp. 125ff.

conformity'. At Worcester, Non-Conformists holding public positions would sporadically attend Holy Communion at the cathedral or a city parish church, but otherwise they would go to one of the Dissenters' chapels. The Independents' chapel stood in Angel Street, the Baptists' in Silver Street, and the Quakers' meeting house was on the site it still occupies near Sansome Walk. At the cathedral the senior clergy were moderate Whigs and more accepting of this ploy than the high-church Tories. For them it was a form of hypocrisy and merely encouraged religious indifference.

The Choir

For the better-off, there were new opportunities and wider horizons, and there are signs that the men of the choir were prosperous enough to take advantage of these. William Hayes, a distinguished Oxford professor of music who had served as organist at Worcester for a few years in his twenties, wrote in 1753 that payments to lay clerks were 'identically the same as at the Reformation: without the least regard to their being at that time a competent maintenance'.³ At Worcester, however, the situation was rather better than this. Lay clerks' annual salaries rose from £6 13^s 4^d at the Reformation to £8 around 1640.⁴ At the Restoration, having restarted at £8, the Dean and Chapter received a letter from Charles II advising an increase to £16 or £20 a year,⁵ and the lower of these figures was accepted and continued into the eighteenth century. This kept pace with inflation, although a lay clerk's income bore no comparison with that offered at the Chapel Royal or Westminster Abbey, so almost all at Worcester would need a second employment.

The lay clerks were a different caste of men from those of the previous century. Some still worked as craftsmen or in trades as their predecessors had, but many found new possibilities. One example is Theophilus Jones, who became a writing master.⁶ At a time when people were increasingly judged by their appearance and social skills, this occupation—the teaching of penmanship—was in its heyday.

³ Hayes (1753), p. 96.

⁴ A26 Treasurer's Book. The change occurred between the 1639 and 1642 accounts.

⁵ A76 Chapter Acts, fol. 9v.

⁶ GB-WOr probate, 4 August 1711 (WI).

Another lay clerk, an Irishman, John Dougharty, was also a teacher. Already an ambitious and enthusiastic mathematician, he had become a published author before his arrival in 1716.⁷ He combined his teaching with various cathedral positions, such as Inspector of the Buildings, Clerk of the Stores, and Collector of Window Tax.⁸ Richard Lovett, a lay clerk from 1722, was a tailor who now earns a place in the *Dictionary of National Biography* because of his amateur interest in the therapeutic use of electricity. He published several books, the first of which, *The Subtil Medium Prov'd*, was reviewed by no less than Samuel Johnson, who in the years following the *Dictionary* (1755) was a contributor to a short-lived publication called the *Literary Magazine*.⁹ Johnson's assessment was that 'he seems at least to be diligent in his enquiries, and faithful in his relations'. Another lay clerk, Charles Clark, was an oboist who played with the city waits for several years before his cathedral appointment in 1735,¹⁰ but his name most often occurs as a concert performer. He played at the Hereford Music Society in 1749–50, which met weekly during the winter months,¹¹ and from 1748 until the 1770s he organised and performed in a quite remarkable series of benefit concerts at Worcester and the surrounding towns.¹²

The Congregation

The type of men singing in the choir had undergone a marked change, but so had membership of the congregation. Alice Soulieux-Evans has observed that from 1690 on, cathedrals were becoming social spaces for elites to socialise and worship,¹³ and for Worcester this is attested by verses written in about 1700 that lampoon members of the congregation. The author, clearly very familiar with the cathedral clergy and worship, wrote, 'letts view them at the Choire'. Although he admitted there were

⁷ Dougharty (1712).

⁸ A56 Treasurer's Book 1746–7, p. 23; A49 Treasurer's Book 1728–9, p. 38.

⁹ Hanley (2001), pp. 178–81; Wiltshire (1990), p. 109.

¹⁰ GB-WOr Chamber Order Book (1722–42), 25 November 1729 (496.5 BA9360/A14/Box 2/2); GB-WOr Audit of City Accounts (1714–35), All Saints' Day (1735) (b496.5 BA9360/A10/Box 5/2); A77 Chapter Acts, fol. 148r, 25 November 1735.

¹¹ Chevill (2004), p. 46.

¹² Advertised in the *Weekly Worcester Journal* and the *Gloucester Journal*.

¹³ Soulieux-Evans (2019), pp. 127–8.

ordinary folk present, those he listed were mainly aristocrats or relatives of senior clergy.¹⁴ And they were not just there to pray but had social reasons as well. One of these reasons is illustrated by a letter from a Jenny Simper published in a daily news publication, *The Spectator*.

January the 14th, 1712

Mr SPECTATOR,

I am a young Woman, and have my Fortune to make; for which Reason I come constantly to Church to hear Divine Service, and make Conquests: But one great Hindrance in this my Design, is, that our Clerk, who was once a Gardner, has this *Christmas* so over deckt the Church with Greens, that he has quite spoilt my Prospect, insomuch that I have scarce seen the young Baronet I dress at these three Weeks [...] Sir *Anthony Love's* Pew in particular is so well hedged that all my Batteries have no Effect. I am obliged to shoot at Random among the Boughs, without taking any manner of Aim. *Mr SPECTATOR*, unless you'll give Orders for removing these Greens, I shall grow a very awkward Creature at Church, and soon have little else to do there but say my Prayers. I am in haste,

Dear SIR,

Your most Obedient Servant,

Jenny Simper¹⁵

The Spectator aimed to help reform manners and morals, and the letter raised what the editors considered an issue of the time in a light-hearted manner, although the text itself was fictional. The Worcester lampoonist mentioned the dean's wife and daughter in a rather similar vein:

Ugley they're both, but that's no matter
if they'd forbear at Church to Chatter.
They plainly shew by all there Actions
they mind not Prayer, but mens transactions.
How Contrary tis to nature
to Se A Bishops wife and daughter
so Strangly over run with Laughter.¹⁶

14 GB-WOR 705:134 BA1531/40(i) Lechmere Archives notebook, p. 12. The lampoon must date from between 1699, when Talbot became Bishop of Oxford, and 1702, when his wife and the mother of his children, Katherine née King, died. A marginal note referring to John Price (d.1705) as 'late chancellor' must have been added later.

15 *The Spectator*, 282 (1712), 23 January.

16 Dean William Talbot was also Bishop of Oxford.

Of the chancellor's wife, he wrote,

Prayers being done, the other glie
to Mrs Price to hear a Lie.
This gape mouth'd woman loves to Cattle
Better than ever Child loved rattle.

The verses are skittish and acerbic, but portray the cathedral in a new light as somewhere fashionable society liked to socialise.

The Dean and Chapter must have been concerned about the issues raised by Jenny Simper's letter as they introduced separate seating for men and women. This was no doubt intended to discourage dalliance or flirting during divine service. For the west end services, it is first mentioned in 1693, when the women's seats there were mended and altered.¹⁷ In the quire, women were allowed to sit in the organ loft until new galleries were built on the north and south sides. These were above the stalls with bookrests over the canopies, and by 1698 were ready for ladies to move across from the organ loft.¹⁸ The gallery on the south was used by the families of the dean and prebendaries, and their seats were later supplied with books of common prayer at the expense of the church; others had to bring their own.¹⁹ Mats were provided, tin sconces for candles, and purple cushions, which were perhaps to rest the prayer books on.²⁰

Cathedral Services and Liturgy

Throughout the reign of Queen Anne, the liturgy continued to follow the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, and William Talbot (dean 1691–1715) insisted on close adherence to its rubrics. He advised clergy to avoid controversy in their sermons and disliked showy preaching, saying, 'A grave and sober style will ever be acceptable; 'tis not necessary that a Discourse must be flat, if it be not frothy'.²¹

¹⁷ A27 Treasurer's Book 1692–3, 10 June 1693.

¹⁸ A77 Chapter Acts, Bishop Lloyd visitation 1702, 5th Injunction.

¹⁹ A78 Chapter Acts, fol. 141r, 20 December 1768.

²⁰ A32 Treasurer's Book, 18 November 1696 (mats); A33 Treasurer's Book 1696–7, p. 37 (sconces); B1877 Inventory 1727–8 (cushions).

²¹ Talbot (1712), p. 20; Talbot (1717), p. 15.

The unusual splitting of the morning services on a Sunday provided an opportunity for innovation in the early years of the century. Even in churches where there was no gap between the first service (Matins) and the second (Holy Communion), it was often considered appropriate to have a short musical item, such as a psalm or anthem, between the two.²² The longer interval at Worcester made a more substantial music meeting possible, as mentioned by the lampoonist:

[lines regarding Mrs Agnes Hartopp]

This proud Advance'd Conceited Creture
 expects that every one shou'd greet her.
 What she returns is with such motion
 as when at Church would spoyle devotion.
 But did y^use her as't often happens
 at Musick Meetting after Mattens
 you'de swear she was some ffidler's daughter
 and so beat time, as Father taught her.

It is possible that a devotional song set for three ladies, *Lord grant my just request*, written by the lay clerk William Davis, was intended for this music meeting after Matins.²³ Davis was probably the most significant Worcester composer of the time, and the three ladies are named in his autograph score as M^{is} Thr., M^{is} Har., and M^{is} Fish. Two of these are identifiable as Agnes Hartopp and Anne Fish, both mentioned by the lampoonist as being in the congregation. It is also possible that members of the choir devised a plan to charge for their participation in the entertainment, as Bishop Lloyd ruled against them attending any music meeting for money in 1708.²⁴ The order came during a meeting at the bishop's triennial visitation of the cathedral and was made after discussion of various issues relating to the services, suggesting that it may have related to the music meeting after Matins.

The prolonged interval between the first and second services on a Sunday must have been abolished later in the century because the

22 Bennet (1709), p. 156; Burton (1846), vol. 2, p. 18, George Bull, Charge to Clergy of the Diocese of St David's, 1708.

23 Newsholme (2013), vol. 1, p. 206; GB-Ob MS Mus. C.16, fol. 98 score.

24 GB-WOr BA 2073, Sat, 6 November 1708.

change was unpopular and was reversed in 1763; ‘surplice prayers’ were again to be sung at an early hour, followed by a gap before the Litany and Communion.²⁵

The name ‘surplice prayers’ arose from the parade of surplices at sung Matins, when both choir and clergy were in attendance, in contrast to the parishioners’ Early Prayers. Minor canons, lay clerks, and choristers wore surplices over gowns,²⁶ and for choristers the gowns were granted on appointment to the foundation and served as a badge of office.²⁷ They also acted as a livery, which by statute was shared by the vergers, porters, sub-sacrist, and almsmen, the almsmen being distinguished by a red and white silk rose worn on the left shoulder. For lay clerks, a previous stipulation that they should wear falling bands rather than cravats was supplemented by the bishop in 1711 with a requirement for neckcloths and ruffles.²⁸ This is in fact the earliest reference to the use of ruff-like wear by the choir. It is notable that it relates to adults of the choir rather than the boys, for whom ruffs were only introduced in the twentieth century.

The early morning weekday, parochial Matins continued at the west end, and from shortly after the installation of the ‘little organ’ in 1667, an organist had received a fee for accompanying the metrical psalm. In 1715 the chapter acts record that the organ had not been used for some time and before that had been ‘shamefully neglected’, so the annual fee was discontinued.²⁹ We must assume that for a few years the psalm was either omitted or sung without accompaniment. A further order two years later, however, required that a psalm was to be ‘sung constantly at the parochial morning prayers’. An organist may have returned, but without an annual payment, as William Davis was granted a gratuity for playing the little organ ‘to this day’ in 1724.³⁰ The use of the organ was probably helpful in suppressing the random ornamenting of the

25 A78 Chapter Acts, fols 110v–111r (1763); A96 Chapter Minutes, 25 November 1769.

26 Bishop’s injunctions at visitations: 1677 (GB-WOr BA3945 712.17147) and 1698 (A76 Chapter Acts, fol. 205r).

27 Demonstrating this, in 1718, ‘these three [choristers] elected are to have ye gowns of this year’ (A77, fol. 72r).

28 Episcopal visitations: A77, 1702 visitation, injunction 2; GB-WOr BA3946, 1711 visitation minutes, 3 October 1711.

29 A77 Chapter Acts, fol. 52v.

30 A93 Chapter Acts, 26 November 1717 (under minor canons); A47 Treasurer’s Book (1723–4), p. 39.

melodies with what *The Spectator* termed ‘the Graces of Nicolini’ (see Chapter Five, section titled Cathedral Services).³¹

National thanksgiving services with published orders of service had been introduced by Charles II to express public gratitude for what was seen as God’s help in achieving victory. Queen Anne developed these on a magnificent scale. In St Paul’s Cathedral she sat on a raised dais in the quire, showing publicly her commitment to the Church of England, associating herself with the military success, and encouraging patriotism and loyalty to the monarch. For several years following her coronation, thanksgiving celebrations followed a regular pattern. At the start of the year’s campaign, an official Fast Day was announced, and then, following each victory, delivered by the Duke of Marlborough with almost annual regularity, a thanksgiving day would be set by Royal Proclamation with a few weeks notice. At Worcester, on the day of the thanksgiving, a procession was formed to the cathedral. The mayor, aldermen, councillors, and the various trades guilds moved with streamers and the music of the city waits, all accompanied by the ringing of the cathedral bells.³² The morning service would follow a printed *Form of Prayer* for Matins, Litany, and Ante-Communion, and a sermon would be given. The sermon was sometimes published, partly because of the difficulty in hearing it on the day because of the ‘throng and noise’.³³

The music included a setting of the *Te Deum* and the *Jubilate* or *Cantate Domino*, and, although it was not mentioned in the published order, there was usually an anthem. The *Te Deum* was considered particularly significant, and it was probably sung to Purcell’s festal D major setting, although this was not actually stated until 1713,³⁴ when it was performed ‘with the symphonies and instrumental parts, on violins and hautboys’. Many of the thanksgiving anthems in the early years of the century seem to have been written for these days by William Davis.³⁵

Queen Anne was very aware that the texts of thanksgiving services would be understood as political commentary as much as scriptural teaching. For the service to mark the victory over the French near Oudenaarde, she chose

31 *The Spectator*, 205 (1711), 25 October (Nicolini was a contemporary Italian castrato); Temperley (1979), vol. 1, p. 133.

32 City Accounts, GB-WOR BA4360/A10/Box 5/1 b496.5.

33 Chaundler (1707).

34 WJ, 3 to 10 July 1713, no. 211.

35 Newsholme (2013), p. 35.

the text for William Croft's anthem at St Paul's herself. It gives thanks to the Lord and refers to his 'wondrous works'.³⁶ A few years later, after the Peace of Utrecht, the Queen had again studied the order of service but had spotted a problem, as explained by David Green in his biography of Anne.³⁷

'Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God'—beautiful. But the next verse: 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'? It was surely irrelevant and open to misinterpretation. Lord Dartmouth hurried to the archbishop to have the verse omitted. This left the peacemakers last, which Dartmouth assured the queen was 'a very proper conclusion upon that occasion'. David Green remarked, 'Dartmouth might at times be too pliable, but he knew his duty'. The earl may well have known his duty, but it seems he was too late to redact the offending verse from the printed *Form of Prayer*, so it was probably included at Worcester.

Unintended interpretations of a text could be a problem, but an anthem could also be made contentious by association. Bryan White has discussed the close link between the words of an anthem and the sermon,³⁸ and this must have been the reason for Bishop William Lloyd banning Purcell's setting of verses from Psalm 106, *O give thanks to the Lord*. The anthem is thought to originally date from a thanksgiving of 1693, when it was written to pair with a sermon by Archbishop John Sharp on the first verse of Psalm 97. At Worcester, Bishop Lloyd's ruling related to sermons made by two prebendaries, John Laughton and George Walls, which scurrilously libelled the governors and members of the church, as well as local magistrates. He must have believed that the anthem was so tainted by its association that it should be boycotted.³⁹

In cathedrals at this time, parts of the liturgy, such as the responses, Creed, Lord's Prayer, the lessons in Morning and Evening Prayers, and the epistle and gospel of the Communion service, were recited on a single note or with traditional inflections. Thomas Bisse, preaching at the 1720 Three Choirs Festival, approved of this.⁴⁰ He believed it gave the words greater dignity,

³⁶ Burrows (2005) p. 36. The anthem was *I will give thanks* (Psalm 105:1–3).

³⁷ Green (1970), p. 288.

³⁸ White (2021), pp. 474–5.

³⁹ Episcopal Visitation 1711, minutes 16 July 1711 (GB-WOR BA 3946).

⁴⁰ Bisse (1721), pp. 30ff.

held the hearers' attention better, and was heard more clearly than speech. He had also found that it made words less likely to be mispronounced. At Worcester such chanting was used, most likely until the 1730s when it was abandoned, to the disappointment of some, like Thomas Collins, rector of Beaconsfield, who was concerned that 'in the Churches of Worcester and Lincoln, the Choir Manner should be *degraded* into the *Parochial* [...] instead of its being *gloriously* perform'd by persons that have been bred up at the Universities, and have, as it were, appropriated themselves to chanting'.⁴¹ It was not restored at Worcester until the final decades of the century.

The Quire Furnishings and the Fabric

There had been some changes to the quire furnishings. A litany desk now stood in the aisle, and the pulpit had been replaced with a portable one.⁴² The eight-branched brass candelabrum still hung above the quire, and Dean Talbot paid for iron gates below the organ, with his arms as Bishop of Oxford and Dean of Worcester on the outside and the year, 1701, on the inside.⁴³ The box pews now had locking doors to which the vergers held keys, with cupboards for choir partbooks.⁴⁴ An inventory states, 'One of the curtains hangs before the old organ',⁴⁵ which suggests that George Dallam's instrument of 1661, with its gallery, still stood on one side of the quire.

Of more significance, however, than any of these for the general appearance would have been the condition of the floor and walls. In the nave and crossing, the floor, mostly of brick, had become uneven and was in poor condition. The quire was rather better as it was paved with black and white marble squares, and an undefined area had been laid in blue stone in 1676.⁴⁶ The walls underwent a radical change in 1740, when they were whitewashed throughout the building and the cloisters. The chapter house had already been treated this way earlier in the century.⁴⁷ The

41 Collins (1737), p. 17.

42 Shown in plans: Willis (1727), p. 623 and Thomas (1736), p. viii.

43 B1876 Inventory 1686; B1877 Inventory 1727–8; A36 Treasurer's Book 1701–2, 24 December 1701; Chambers (1819), p. 129.

44 A26 Treasurer's Book 1662–3, 8 August 1663; B1876 Inventory 1686.

45 B1877 Inventory 1727–8.

46 A27 Treasurer's Book 1675–6, p. 21; Add MS 133v John Loveday diary ('body, Cross-Isle and Presbytery are paved in Brick, now 'tis old and in bad condition').

47 A53 Treasurer's Book 1739–40, p. 20 (Whitewashing church and cloisters); A38 Treasurer's Book 1704–5, p. 26 (Whitewashing chapter house).

whitewash could not disguise the damage though, and Valentine Green wrote of the cathedral in these years, ‘the ravages of the grand rebellion were still reproachfully visible’. Also, there were structural problems. These needed some £7000 to be spent in an attempt to rectify them, and even then a further £1200 had to be raised by mortgaging the demesne lands and meadows bordering the Severn to make the building safe.⁴⁸

The Choir and Its Management

After the fracas that led to a temporary excommunication of both Richard Cherington and John Thatcher, Cherington’s full annual salary of sixteen pounds as organist and eight pounds as master of choristers was restored, although how much help he still needed is unclear. The precentor and minor canons, tasked by the bishop to monitor the choristers’ improvement, were able to report in 1698 that they had gained ‘good proficiency in singing’,⁴⁹ but attendance over the next few years by both the men and the boys was criticised. Bishop Lloyd commented in 1709:

often times when we have been at the Cathedrall Church we could not but see that there was a small appearance of Choristers, and that they that did attend did few of them mind their Duty in Singing and making Responses, and that some were very disorderly to the great scandal of the Discipline of this Church.⁵⁰

He believed that certain choristers did not even fulfil the statutory admission requirements (‘boys of tender age with tuneful voices suitable for singing’) and made the unprecedented decision to expel them and order their replacement with Queen’s Scholars who did.⁵¹

A recurring problem, not unique to Worcester, was the frequent interruption of services to choose the music. This does not imply that much preparation or rehearsal was taking place—a situation hardly

⁴⁸ Green (1796), vol. 1, p. 138; A77 Chapter Acts, fol. 48r (1713); Engel (2007), pp. 39ff.

⁴⁹ A76 Chapter Acts, bishop’s visitation 1695, 5th injunction; GB-WOR BA 3946, Bishop’s visitation 1698, 5th answer

⁵⁰ B740b Bishop’s visitation, 4th injunction, Friday 25 March 1709.

⁵¹ GB-WOR BA 2073 Bishop’s visitation, 15 December 1708. The ‘king’s scholars’ established by Henry VIII were, somewhat illogically, called ‘queen’s scholars’ in Queen Anne’s reign.

improved by the ruling of 1691 that the choir should meet the precentor during the fifteen-minute tolling of the bell before services to be informed of his choice.⁵² The requirement may have prevented interruptions for a time, but the issue recurred fifteen years later, and a written copy of the rule had to be posted in the vestry as a reminder.⁵³

It happened that the revision of the statutes on behalf of Charles II had introduced a new clause that proved to be very convenient. Richard Cherington's official job title was simply 'organist', and the clause allowed that if one of the minor canons or lay clerks was more suited to be the choristers' teacher, he could be awarded the post. In 1711 the duty was moved to a lay clerk, Ralph Dean. The appointment may have improved the management of the boys, but poor attendance by the men, including that of Dean himself, became a problem, as shown by attendance records kept by the precentor, Luke Flintoft.⁵⁴ From 1720 Ralph Dean's health failed, and six-monthly roll calls mark him as repeatedly absent.⁵⁵ The next year he advertised the sale of his house in Diglis, Worcester, perhaps with the intention of moving to the country—a frequent expedient for helping chronic ill health.⁵⁶ He died the following November.

Another lay clerk, and probably the most distinguished Worcester musician of the period, William Davis, succeeded him. He was a former chorister and the son of Richard Davis, a previous organist, and had been a lay clerk since 1694. He had already made his mark by composing music for the thanksgiving celebrations during their years of glory. From his time we can gain a little information on the appointment of choristers. On a single occasion, towards the start of his time in post, Davis felt the need to advertise in the local paper:⁵⁷

College of Worcester, Nov. 20. 1723

ANY Boy of between 7 and 10 Years of Age, that has a Genius and Inclination to Musick, may come to William Davis Master of the Choristers; and, if approv'd of, be instructed in the Rudiments of Song; and when deserving, Prefer'd to the Choir.

52 A76 Chapter Acts, fol. 154, 23 June 1691.

53 GB-WOR BA2082 714.7, Bishop's visitation, 24 April 1706.

54 A77 Chapter Acts, fol. 56v, 28 January 1715/16; Precentor's lists: D209, D210, D246.

55 D821 Roll calls.

56 WJ, 7 to 14 April 1721.

57 WJ, 15 to 22 November 1723.

This implies that Davis was involved in the appointment process, that he expected there to be a time of preliminary learning before boys joined the choir, and the ages he considered appropriate for starting this. He rehearsed choristers in one of the rooms above the south aisle of the nave, which had been vacated by the library when it was moved to the chapter house in 1675. A harpsichord may have been kept there, which was repaired on one occasion by the organist, John Merifield,⁵⁸ and each winter Davis was allowed a ton of coal to keep the room warm. The fireplace has disappeared, but the names of choristers of the time can still be seen, graffitied on the stone of the window bays.⁵⁹

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is for the Organ, featuring sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom staff is for the Contratenor solo, with lyrics in English. The lyrics are:

Lord, why sleep-est thou, why sleep-est thou? Send help, send
help un - to_ Ja - cob, send help, help, send help un - to_ Ja - cob,

Time signatures are indicated below the bass staff: 6, #, 6, 6, 7, #, 8, 6, #, 6, 6, #, 6, #.

Fig. 30 The start of William Davis's verse anthem, *Lord, why sleepest thou?* Note the ground bass (transcribed by the author)⁶⁰

⁵⁸ A125xi Receiver General Accounts, 1739 section.

⁵⁹ The names are R Roberts, R Mence, W[illiam] H[emming], R Hall, Will: Dean, with the date 1721. All were choristers from Michaelmas that year.

⁶⁰ GB-Ob MS Mus. C.16

The precentor was in overall charge of the choir, but the experience and musical knowledge of the Worcester precentors varied greatly. Andrew Trebeck (1672–1715) and Luke Flintoft (1715–c.18) were both well-respected musicians with broad experience in church music. Both had sung in university choirs: Trebeck at Magdalen College, Oxford, and Flintoft at King's College, Cambridge,⁶¹ and Flintoft had formerly been a chorister at Trinity College in the same university.⁶² Although both would have been absent for much of the year while singing at the Chapel Royal, when they were present in Worcester, their views would have carried weight. The two precentors who followed, William Phillips (c.1719–30) and Matthew Forrester (1730–49), are not known to have had anything like the same musical background. Both copied music for the choir, but neither is known to have sung in any choir elsewhere or to have had any other musical experience. They may have been careful, conscientious men, but their experience was markedly different from their two predecessors and also from the man who succeeded Forrester, John Smith. Smith (precentor 1749–71) had been a minor canon since 1733 and had been appointed a priest in ordinary of the Chapel Royal in 1739. At that time a London newspaper called him 'a Gentleman of so fine a Voice, as to revive the Memory of the famous Elford, in all those Judges of Musick, who have had the Pleasure to hear them both',⁶³ and three years later he was being rewarded for 'Performing extraordinary Service in Singing before the Royal Family'.⁶⁴

The involvement of each precentor may have varied with his interest and expertise. Unless he opted out of some responsibilities, he would normally choose the music, take full choir rehearsals, and assess candidates applying to join. One task not expected of him was to conduct the choir during services; it was seen as the organist's job to set a tempo and maintain ensemble. Ripon Cathedral is famous for still having a moving wooden hand of 1695 protruding from the organ case, which was operated by the organist's foot for this purpose. John Alcock believed that Peterborough Cathedral used the same contrivance,⁶⁵ but more commonly he had heard the organist beating time with his foot 'as if he was hammering' to 'give the *Time* to the *Singers*'.

61 Foster (1891); Venn (1922).

62 Reynolds (2004).

63 Ashbee and Harley (2000), vol. 1, p. 56; *London Daily Post and General Advertiser* (1739), 1387, Monday 9 April.

64 Ashbee and Harley (2000), vol. 1, p. 306.

65 Alcock (1760), p. 309 (or he may have confused Peterborough with Ripon).

After Richard Cherington, William Davis served as master of the choristers alongside three organists: John Hoddinot, William Hayes, and John Merifield. The two posts were not combined again until Davis's death in 1745. Although not officially the organist, he would doubtless have undertaken this role at times, and his personal organ book has survived. He titled it *Will Davis Eius Liber*, and it gives some idea of the organ music that he would have played liturgically.⁶⁶ Along with secular works, the volume includes voluntaries and versets by John Blow and Christopher Gibbons, some anonymous voluntaries, and of particular importance, the sole surviving source of Henry Purcell's famous Voluntary in D minor for double organ (Z719). Rebecca Herissons has observed that Davis edited a voluntary by Blow as he copied it by adding passing notes and suppressing a suspension, and similar liberties are evident in a Worcester organ book used to accompany the choir.⁶⁷ Such organ books consisted of a figured bass line for realisation by the organist during performance, with occasional vocal leads or other details added where necessary. In solo verse sections and organ-only passages in this book, the harmony has actually been altered from the original in one or two places, most likely by Davis.⁶⁸



Fig. 31 William Davis' notes for his realisation of the organ part for Aldrich's *The Lord is King* (A3.10, p. 44, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

⁶⁶ GB-Lbl Add MS 31486.

⁶⁷ Herissons (2013), pp. 251ff.

⁶⁸ E.g., A3.10 Organ book: solo verse in Croft, *The earth is the Lord's*; ritornello in Jeremiah Clark, *O be joyful*.

Certainly in his hand are sketches, probably from late 1707, for an inventive realisation of the figured bass for Henry Aldrich's *The Lord is King* (Fig 31). He has added a cornet part, pre-echoing the treble line and including demi-semiquaver figuration between the sung phrases.⁶⁹ The cornet part has even needed an alteration to the organ bass line at one point to fit it.⁷⁰ Davis seems to have been exceptional in his adaptations of other composers' organ parts; there are no similar annotations in the organ book copied by John Hoddinot, for example.

Knowledge of the organ Davis played is limited. From 1707 until mid-century, the Coventry organbuilder Thomas Swarbrick was paid an annual stipend of eight pounds for caring for it. On two occasions there were higher payments: twenty pounds in 1700 to Bernard Smith, and twenty-five plus a five-pound gratuity to Thomas Swarbrick in 1707.⁷¹ The cornet part added to the Aldrich anthem suggests that such a stop was available from the end of the latter year, and a later source calls this a mounted cornet, which was one on a raised soundboard to project the sound. It may have been the work of one of these builders.⁷²

The Jacobites

The Royal succession was a matter of concern throughout Queen Anne's reign, but became very topical around the time of her death, and Sir John Packington of Westwood, near Droitwich, was identified as leader of the 'Worcester cabal' of Jacobites.⁷³ The unpopularity of George I increased their support, and many longed for a restoration of the Stuart dynasty. In the summer of 1715, the Jacobites rioted in several counties, including Worcestershire, attacking Dissenters' meeting houses, and on July 11th, a reporter wrote from Worcester:

⁶⁹ A3.10, p. 44 (anthem end). The anthem that follows is also copied by Davis and has the postscript 'Decem^{br}: ye 25 1707 Paid by Dr Chandler to this place', so both pieces are likely to have been copied in 1707.

⁷⁰ The annotations are likely to have been made at the time of copying, because the bass for bars 3–4 has already been adapted from that found elsewhere to fit in with the cornet part (GB-Och Mus MS 19, GB-Och Mus MS 22, GB-Lbl Add MS 22099, GB-Lbl Add MS 17840).

⁷¹ A35 Treasurer's Book 1699–70, 9 March 1699/1700; A39 Treasurer's Book 1706–7, p. 35.

⁷² GB-Lco Sperling Notebook, vol. 3, p. 43.

⁷³ Ellis (1977), *The Worcester Cabal*, ballad by William Walsh.

Our Mob is as ripe for Demolition as in other places [...] We have actually prepar'd Fire-Arms for 'em, and they know it, which strikes the Rogues with such Terror, that they have not yet attempted the Meeting-House, our Magistrates have very kindly promis'd their utmost Endeavours to suppress them, if they make any onset, and we have kept Watch for a Week past.⁷⁴

For the anniversary of George I's coronation during the time of the Jacobite rising in Scotland and the north of England, the mayor, aldermen, councillors, and the various trades companies processed to the cathedral for Morning Prayers with drums and the city music. After 'Prayers and the Anthem' were finished, they retired to the Bush and Globe taverns, but the day was marred by a fracas between the soldiers and citizens, who had allegedly shouted Jacobite slogans.⁷⁵ Such days of official celebration often sparked flash points, and special precautions started to be taken to avoid trouble. On the king's birthday the following year, a foot regiment marched up the High Street to the cathedral and assembled in the College Green, while officers assisted at Evensong and heard 'a fine new Anthem made for the Day by the famous Mr Roseingrave'. Again, the service was followed by an evening at the local tavern, but, aware of the increased risk of rioting, a constant patrol was kept throughout the time.⁷⁶

The defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden in 1746 effectively ended the Stuart cause, although at least until the previous year there were enough Jacobite supporters in Worcester to justify the existence of a 'Constitutional Club' in support of George II.⁷⁷

* * *

The first half of the eighteenth century has often been seen as a time of religious moderation and toleration in the church. There was still, however, a hatred of Papism, with Jacobites and the Roman Church closely allied in the minds of many, and even non-jurors often suspected (without just cause) of leaning towards Rome. The well-known non-juror and former minor canon Thomas Maurice lived on in College Green after his ejection. Tradition has it that he continued to attend cathedral services, and he

74 *Flying Post* (1715), 3672, 16 to 19 July.

75 WJ, 21 to 28 October 1715, issue 331.

76 *Flying Post* (1716), 3810, 2 to 5 June. 'Mr Roseingrave' may refer to Thomas Roseingrave (1691–1766) despite him having Jacobite tendencies, which are mentioned by Hunter (2001), p. 554.

77 MacDonald (1943), p. 125 and plate XVIII.

seems to have been on good speaking terms with the prebendaries who were his neighbours.⁷⁸ He died in 1748, ‘silvered over with the weight and infirmities of eighty-eight years’, and was buried under a now-famous gravestone bearing the single word *Miserrimus* [most wretched one]. He was one of the last of the generation of non-jurors; the perceived threat of both the Jacobites and the non-jurors was receding.⁷⁹

After an uncertain start to the century, music at the cathedral had advanced. William Davis, a gifted musician, was ambitious, particularly in his early years, and had provided the choir with new music for the high-profile thanksgiving services. Later, when he became better off, he was able to apply his attention to teaching the choristers, eventually, when he died, leaving them each a pair of gloves and a crape hatband as a token of mourning.⁸⁰

Work on the fabric had also moved forward. The building had been made safe, even if some of the remedies were temporary fixes that would not be properly resolved until the Victorian restoration. Roofs had been renewed and re-leaded, the worst of the exterior weathered sandstone had been refaced, and much-admired tall pinnacles had been built.⁸¹

Challenges remained, but significant advances had been made. Overall, the situation at mid-century seemed to bode well for the future.

78 GB-Ob MS Rawl. (statutes) 65, fol. 1v, letter of Thomas Maurice, 12 June 1742.

79 Green (1796), vol. 2, appendix, p. xxvii.

80 Newsholme (2013).

81 Engel (2007), pp. 39–43.

8. A Mixed Century: The Later Georgian Period (1740–1840)

Music and liturgy proceeded in a largely creditable, if unadventurous, manner during the earlier part of this period, and the choristers were trained by conscientious men. The music festival, now well-established, had become an important date on the choir's calendar, especially when the festival was held at Worcester. But by the 1840s there had been a serious downturn in the music, which must have been developing for years. Can we trace the causes for this? Where did the blame lie?

The senior Worcester clergy by mid-century were John Waugh, dean, and Isaac Maddox, bishop. John Waugh had distinguished himself by his support of the government during the Jacobite rising of 1745 and took office six years later, having assured the ecclesiastical minister, the Duke of Newcastle, that he would support the Whig cause. Isaac Maddox had been bishop of St Asaph but was translated to Worcester in 1743. He had been a Non-Conformist until his mid-twenties and at Worcester became known for his support of charitable causes, including the founding of the Worcester Infirmary in Silver Street. He also supported the Whigs.

Maddox believed that certain ceremonies and customs of the Protestant Church, such as the wearing of surplices by the choir and vestments by the clergy, and kneeling to receive the Sacrament, were 'things indifferent'. They were useful in keeping weak brethren in the Protestant Church and preventing them falling prey to popish priests.¹ He believed that services should be performed seriously, gravely and distinctly. The Holy Sacrament was to be administered with the utmost reverence and devotion, and with adequate preparation of the people.

¹ Maddox (1733), p. 93.

Regarding sermons, he wrote that 'The Word of God is to be *preached* and explained to the People, with Diligence, with Plainness, with an affectionate Seriousness'.² This was a much softer approach than that of the Non-Conformists of the Commonwealth cathedral. At that time, preachers had been encouraged to bring their message home so that 'Auditors may feel the Word of God to be quick and powerful'.³ Sermons of Maddox's time could hardly ignore events in the country, however, and politics and religion continued to be closely interwoven. The menace of the Jacobites may have subsided, but the threat of France remained, and Maddox believed the French posed a Catholic peril. To him, popery was an 'artful, treacherous, cruel, unrelenting Superstition', and the danger was one 'of double Bondage, an accursed Subjection to France and to Rome'.⁴

Chanting the Liturgy

The liturgy in Maddox's time and later continued to be spoken rather than chanted, and this was a matter that split opinion. Some disliked it because it was often sung badly, but others regarded it as an important distinction between cathedral and parish church services. Thomas Warton, poet, fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, and rector of Kiddington, Oxfordshire, visited Worcester in April 1777 and had his own reason for preferring chanting. He believed that because the prayers were only read, 'the vile provincial dialect and twang of the singing-boys betrays itself to a most disgusting degree'.⁵ Chanting, he felt, would have improved this. He added another annoyance: 'When service begins, a blue stuff curtain is dropped, not drawn up, before the choir-door, which certainly does not assist the music'. For whatever reason, chanting of the liturgy does seem to have been restarted shortly after. The diarist John Byng, having arrived at Worcester in time for the Litany and Communion one Sunday morning four years later, wrote that it was 'ill perform'd with chaunting'.⁶ Possibly he was only referring

2 Maddox (1745), p. 21.

3 *A Directory for the Publique Worship of God* (1651), p. 15.

4 Maddox (1745), p. v.

5 Wheeler (1829), p. 171.

6 Byng (1954), p. 51, 1 July 1781.

to the chanting of the Litany, but a marginal note in a chapter act book at Gloucester confirms that the custom of chanting the service was restarted, probably in the 1780s.⁷

Around the turn of the century, chanting of the liturgy may have again fallen out of use, until it was re-introduced in 1807 for the morning services and then in 1825 for Evensong also.⁸ One minor canon, Joseph Shapland, wrote to the dean that, although he was interested in the late alteration of the mode of service, he felt so utterly incompetent at chanting that he hoped the dean would not insist on his attendance to do so.⁹ The dean agreed to allow Shapland to employ a substitute, but the appointment of a non-singing minor canon was an infringement of the statutes, and the loss of singers in the choir was to prove an increasing problem.

Men Serving as Organist and Master of Choristers

On the death of John Merifield, a new organist and master of the choristers was appointed. He was Elias Isaac, who had been born in the Cotswold village of Tormarton, Gloucestershire, in 1725.¹⁰ At the age of seventeen, he had been apprenticed to Maurice Greene in London, and the next year was admitted a singingman at Gloucester Cathedral.¹¹ He came to Worcester as organist in 1747, when he would have been about twenty-two,¹² and for five years one of his choristers, William Brown, was paid an additional three pounds a year for unspecified duties, but probably for acting as assistant organist. Brown became a lay clerk and eventually left in 1765 to become organist and master of the choristers at Lichfield Cathedral.

As a pupil of Maurice Greene, Elias Isaac may have favoured his music. Six copies of Greene's *Forty Select Anthems in Score* were chained

7 GB-GL Chapter Act Book 4, pp. 105–6, quoted by Wilson (1996), p. 158.

8 A81 Chapter Acts, fol. 52v, 25 November 1825.

9 A80 Chapter Acts, 2 February 1807, fol. 173r.

10 Baptised 26 June 1725 at St Mary Magdalene, Tormarton, Glos.

11 Talbot (2017), footnotes: p. 99 (no. 25), p. 102 (no. 28); GB-GL Chapter Act Book 3 (1740–74), p. 21 (admitted singingman 3 November 1743), p. 31 (John Price admitted in his place 26 November 1745).

12 A77 Chapter Acts, fol. 215v, 25 November 1747.

to the stalls in the quire,¹³ although music copied into a bass partbook in the 1740s is mainly from the Restoration.¹⁴ The counterpoint of the Tudor composers was unpopular, and one of the minor canons, William Hughes, believed that Tallis 'sacrificed the whole Sense and meaning of the Te Deum for the Sake of his Favourite Counter-Point'.¹⁵ Isaac wrote two anthems himself and also a short secular cantata, *The Black-Birds*, and he seems to have served the cathedral conscientiously. When his health faltered at the age of sixty-five, it presented a familiar conundrum: having worked at the cathedral for forty years, he was becoming too infirm to carry on but had no pension.¹⁶ The issue was tackled with a solution that was probably quite common at the time. Isaac was to continue with his job title and salary, while his assistant, Thomas Pitt, took over the workload with the expectation of succeeding to the post. He did this three years later, in July 1793, on Elias Isaac's death.

Thomas Pitt spent his entire life in Worcester, most of it around the cathedral, where he was chorister and pupil of Isaac before becoming his assistant.¹⁷ He was presumably paid a small salary by Isaac and earned what he could from teaching and from music copying for the cathedral. His mother, Anne, was the daughter of John Hoddinot, a previous Worcester Cathedral organist; his uncle, John, was a former chorister; and Anne's twin sister, Mary, was married to the precentor, the Revd John Smith. His extended family was thus widely involved in the work of the cathedral at various times. There is no evidence that he married, but in 1802 he received a significant bequest when his uncle, John Hoddinot of Upper Westwood, Wiltshire (the former chorister), left him his estate at Westwood.¹⁸

Thomas Pitt made his main contribution to the choir's repertoire by arranging Handel's oratorio movements for performance as anthems, apparently having been inspired to do so after singing tenor at the 1784

13 A1.6.5 'Catalogue of all ye Music Books in ye Choir', 1771. Greene's *Lord let me know my end* was sung at Isaac's funeral (Chambers (1820), p. 503).

14 A2.1 Bass cantoris partbook, pp. 1–145, hand not identified. The payment on p. 145, anthem end, on May 27th 1748 probably applies to the copying of pp. 1–145 which was therefore carried out in the months before this (there are no 'paid to this point' entries before p. 145).

15 Hughes (1763), p. 26.

16 A80 Chapter Acts, 10 December 1790, fol. 56r.

17 Chorister November 1754 to November 1767 (D821 Roll calls).

18 PCC Will, GB-Lna PROB 11/1378/150, proved 20 July 1802.

Handel centenary celebrations in London.¹⁹ E H Fellowes suggested that Theodore Aylward, the organist of St George's Chapel, Windsor, started the fashion of using oratorio extracts as anthems,²⁰ but Thomas Pitt may have paved the way for this. He gained the patronage of King George III on his visit to Worcester in 1788, presenting him with a manuscript score of an adaptation of Handel's music which he hoped to publish. The king was known to be a great admirer of Handel and seemed pleased with the idea. He responded by giving ten guineas as a subscription to the forthcoming publication, and on its appearance, it was promptly pressed into use at Windsor. The arrangements gave both the king and Aylward satisfaction, and Aylward wrote to Thomas Pitt, sending him some gift to show his appreciation:

I have sent with this letter a trifle for the favour you did me in your Publication which we very often use, and always with great pleasere to his Majesty, which gives an additional pleasure to Dear S^r

Yours truly to Command
Theodore Aylward
Windsor 1 May 1793²¹

Pitt's Handel arrangements were used at Worcester on certain days, such as Advent Sunday, Christmas Day, Palm Sunday, and Easter Day.²² He also adapted the orchestral anthem *O be joyful in God* by William Boyce in the same way and wrote a small number of works himself. These include service settings and a few verse anthems (Fig. 32).

Thomas Pitt died after a short illness in 1806 at the age of fifty-eight. He was followed by two short-serving organists, Jeremiah Clark and William Kenge, and then in 1813 by a local teenage prodigy. Charles Clarke was born in Worcester on December 19th 1795. His father Thomas had served as precentor, but at the time of Charles's birth, had exchanged that post for the role of sacrist. Charles was the eighth of nine children and spent his childhood with this large family in the Edgar Tower. In 1804 he was appointed a chorister in the cathedral choir, joining two brothers there, and also became an excellent organist.

19 Burney (1785), p. 20.

20 Fellowes (1969), p. 219.

21 B3.33 Organ book.

22 A flier glued into B3.33.

At the age of fifteen, whilst still a chorister, he applied for the post of organist at Durham Cathedral to replace the respected and long-serving Thomas Ebdon. Startlingly, he was appointed, despite there being several other able candidates.²³ How well Durham was served by this unusual appointment is difficult to say, but when a vacancy of the organist's post arose at Worcester a couple of years later, he was pleased to accept it and move home.²⁴ He no doubt possessed a youthful enthusiasm, a dazzling keyboard technique and a detailed knowledge of local people and customs. But would these advantages outweigh his lack of experience?

Fig. 32 Part of a treble verse section from Thomas Pitt's anthem *Arise O Lord God*
(transcribed from the organ book B1.43 by the author)

23 Durham Cathedral Chapter Act Book GB-DRc DCD/B/AA/11, fol. 122r, 20 November 1811.

24 A80 Chapter Acts, fol. 213r, 19 November 1813.

Changes in Performance of the Liturgy

At the time, Holy Communion was celebrated every Sunday morning, but Sacrists' account books show a striking change in attendance by the congregation at this.²⁵ These books are ledgers recording the alms given each Sunday or feast day and their subsequent distribution among the poor of local parishes. The 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* includes the Offertory in the Ante-Communion, but it appears that at Worcester, the Offertory Sentences and the collection of alms were delayed until the non-communicants had left the church.²⁶ This meant that if all had left, there would be no alms, and this fact would be entered in the sacrist's book. Such a complete exit was almost unheard of in eighteenth-century Worcester, but for nearly fifty years, between 1799 and 1845, it happened increasingly often. Towards the end of this time on almost forty Sundays of the year, Holy Communion would be held only for the benefit of the clergy. The days that did attract some attendance tended to be the first Sunday of each month and festivals such as Easter Day, Good Friday, Whit Sunday and Christmas Day. At the start of the trend in 1799, the Dean and Chapter had circulated 'treatises' among the houses of the precincts and some town parishes encouraging more frequent attendance for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but these seem to have been to no avail.²⁷

Even contemporaries were unsure of the reason for this neglect of Holy Communion. George Smith, a Sheffield curate, had a similar experience with diminishing numbers of communicants. In a sermon of 1800, he asked his congregation if they only received the sacrament previously out of novelty, if they were offended by the 'purity' of preparation that the Church required before Communion, or if they just found the doctrine itself unpalatable.²⁸ Many cathedrals did not even offer a weekly Communion until the late 1840s, when at last there were signs of a general recovery. A newspaper commentator reporting on this revival welcomed it as an indication of 'greater religious earnestness in the cathedrals generally', which seems to imply that he attributed the former lapse to apathy.²⁹

In the later years of the Georgian era, there was a trend towards a greater informality in worship, and this has been discussed by F C Mather.³⁰ Some

25 A407a Sacrist's Account Book 1755–1832; A407b Sacrist's Account Book 1833–1872.

26 See Chapter Six, section titled A New Service Scheme.

27 A80, November 1799, fol. 126v.

28 Smith (1800), p. 16.

29 *Morning Post* (1849), 13 November, p. 7 (quoting *The Guardian*).

30 Mather (1985), p. 261.

regretted this, and a correspondent to a periodical of 1803 lamented what he called the irreverence of elegant worshippers who, rather than kneeling for the prayers, would lean forward a little and whisper the prayers after the minister.³¹ The clergyman W H Havergal, later an honorary canon of the cathedral, also believed there was a lack of reverence. He drafted a sermon for his congregation at Astley, Worcestershire, in 1824, with the words 'Sure am I that many need to be told again & again that this is the House of God, the very gate of Heaven. Were the whole Parish practically convinced of this [...] how devout would all be'.³²

Some of the trappings and customs we might associate with high churchmanship were discarded. Candlesticks were removed from the altar, which was described by one member of the congregation with a hint of disapproval:

The altar table was [...] covered on the top only with a mean red cloth with fringe & in the centre was a small stand supporting a prayer book bound in crimson velvet with gold plates ([...] said to have been given to the Cathedral by King Charles II, it was never used)³³

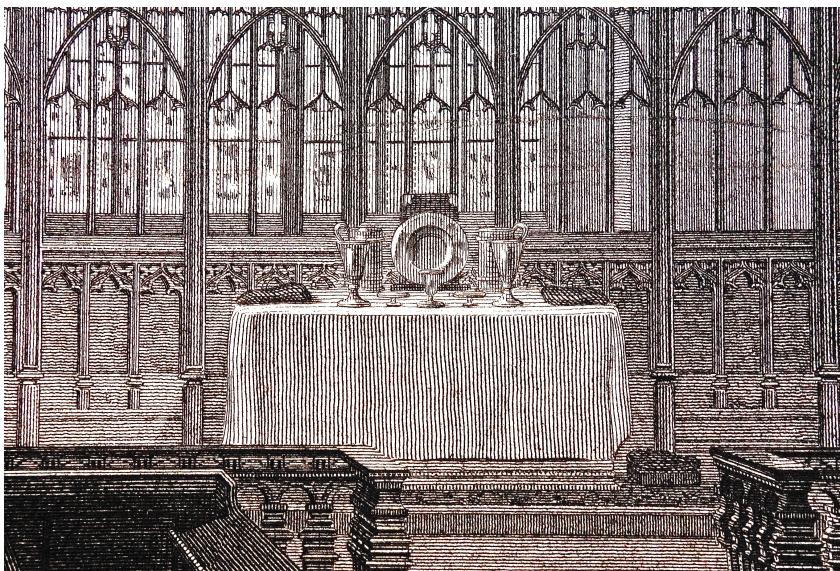


Fig. 33 Communion plate in 1823: two flagons, two communion cups, and two patens on stands. Leaning against the Charles II *Book of Common Prayer* is an alms plate (detail from engraving in Wild (1823), public domain)

31 *Orthodox Churchman's Magazine* (1803), 5, p. 237.

32 A6.29 Havergal Scrap Book, Easter Day 1824.

33 Add MS 128, John Randall memories, pp. 4–5.

Sitting within the altar rails was allowed on occasion, for example, for boarding schools at the Infirmary service in 1789 and for ensigns at the Consecration of Colours of the Volunteers in 1804.³⁴ This holy area of the church would formerly have been reserved for clergy when officiating at Eucharist; earlier generations would have been appalled.

Paving the Floor

Meanwhile, the whitewashed cathedral was not drawing admiration from all visitors. Despite the work of the first half of the century on the fabric, one wrote in 1746, ‘I was grieved to see it lay in that squalid & dirty condition I found it, & what makes it ye more notorious is its lying between those two elegant & adorned cathedrals Hereford & Gloucester’.³⁵ This impression probably had much to do with the floor, described as being old and in poor condition by another visitor thirteen years before.³⁶ The chapter made a decision to act on this and sent a workman to Gloucester to inspect the pavement there; it was laid in stone from Painswick, which was firm, did not retain moisture, and could be transported to Worcester by water.³⁷ Reports from Gloucester must have been favourable because the chapter went ahead and bought Painswick stone in 1750, and over the next year the cathedral was shut and re-floored.³⁸ The nave was cleared and became a large, empty and unused space. The stone pulpit was reassigned to the quire, where it replaced the movable one, and even the consistory court moved: first to the east end of the south aisle of the Lady Chapel, and then in 1796 to below the great east window.³⁹ Presumably the Lady Chapel was not required for worship. The Jesus Chapel was laid open to the nave and was repurposed as a baptistery with a new marble font.

³⁴ A147 Sexton’s notebook (1785–1804).

³⁵ Walters (1935), p. 30.

³⁶ Add MS 133v, Diaries of John Loveday (1711–89).

³⁷ A78 Chapter Acts, 18 May 1750, fol. 19r.

³⁸ A56 Treasurer’s Book (1749–50), p. 16.

³⁹ A80 Chapter Acts, 21 November 1796, fol. 93v.

The Organ

At about the same time, it was decided to rebuild the organ. The precentor was tasked with requesting an estimate from Thomas Swarbrick for new keyboards. Two hundred pounds was agreed by the chapter, and this was supplemented with another hundred in 1752 to 'add the stops that are wanting in the great organ and to make it full, perfect and compleat in all its parts'.⁴⁰ No details have survived, but three linked sources from the early 1800s give clues.⁴¹ Harris's chair organ of 1666–9 remained almost unaltered. New keyboards were installed by Swarbrick, and, according to the historian Valentine Green, a trumpet also dates from this time.⁴² That leaves only a stopped diapason, tierce and mixture, which replaced a recorder, principal and fifteenth of Thomas Harris's organ. These were all of uncertain date but present by the early 1800s, so the organ remained quite small for a cathedral instrument.⁴³ The little organ at the west end, removed to repave the nave, was never replaced.

Choir Repertoire

The young organist, Charles Clarke, having been appointed in 1813, was to work at Worcester Cathedral for over thirty years. For the last ten of these, we can gain some idea of the repertoire in use from a notebook kept from 1834 by the precentor, Allen Wheeler⁴⁴ (Fig. 34). The record is not continuous, and there are many gaps, but the music included was mostly of the eighteenth century with a leavening of Restoration pieces. It included just a single anthem by Purcell, *O give thanks*. A brief experiment with Byrd and Gibbons in 1842 seems to have been quickly abandoned, but two short anthems by Richard Farrant, *Call to remembrance* and *Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake*, were popular and often repeated. In fact, an anthem's brevity seems to have become an incentive to select it.

40 A78 Chapter Acts, fols. 8v, 35r.

41 GB-Lcm Organographia, p. 42; GB-Lco Sperling Notebook, vol. 3, p. 43; Leffler in Pearce (1912); see Thistlethwaite (1977).

42 A78 Chapter Acts, fols. 8v, 35r; Green (1796), vol. 1, p. 115.

43 The mixture was a sesquialtera below middle C, and a fourniture above.

44 D4.23 Precentor's notebook.

	Morning	Evening
Monday	Chant 68 Daphnis Why do the Heather No. 97	Chant 70 Do The Northern declare. No. 1 Irish
Tuesday	Bryce in A Harrow set God. Blake	King in B. The last Psalm,
Wednesday	No Organ	
Thursday	No. 74 Ieridum Saw. No. 23 Rem my erg in Wilson. Rigor in the Lord	No. 22 King in C King.
Friday	No Organ No. 77.	No. 20
Saturday	Names Save me. Poster Shalond him. Blow	No
Sunday	Sarkion in E Bishop in D Behold God in my salvation Clarke	No. 73. Jones
	Chants 22 & 74. Very appropriate for the 17 th Day of the Month	

Fig. 34 A page from the precentor's notebook for 1842 (D4.23, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

In 1771 John Alcock, the former organist of Lichfield Cathedral, had published his anthem *Wherewithal shall a young man*, saying that it 'has no other Merit than its Shortness, and may serve, in a Cold Frosty Morning, by Way of Variety'. He listed eight other anthems that could be used similarly, each lasting only a minute and a half,

and which he claimed were often used in some cathedrals even during the summer.⁴⁵ The Worcester repertoire included several such very short anthems, and they were sung increasingly in the 1840s. Examples are Bernadetto Marcello's *The heavens declare the glory of God* and the canonic *I will arise and go to my Father* by Robert Creighton. Creighton's anthem was only twenty-six bars long and appears seventeen times in the eighteen months of lists surviving for 1842–3.⁴⁶

Another way of achieving a short anthem was by singing only the first verse section followed by the final chorus. This clipping was applied at times to a number of anthems, unavoidably diminishing them in the process. Purcell's *O give thanks* thus lost its expressive chromatic verse passage, *Remember me O Lord*, and James Kent's *Sing O heavens* was cut from a hundred and eighty bars to just sixty-six. On occasion, it may have been reduced even further by performing the first verse section alone. No reasons are given for mutilating anthems in this way, and often a search for an explanation is unproductive. For Easter morning in 1835, William Croft's *We will rejoice in thy salvation* was truncated to only its first chorus, and it is just possible that on this festal day it was thought more fitting to omit the fairly long minor-key verse section that followed.⁴⁷ But in most cases, it seems that the trimming can only have been motivated by a desire to cut down the singing, and perhaps therefore the time spent in church. A similar urge is implied by a ruling of December 1838. The dean announced that Morning Prayers on Sundays would be read without choir or organ, and this change is confirmed by the music schedules, which cease listing settings for the morning canticles and anthems.⁴⁸

45 John Alcock, *Six and Twenty Select Anthems in Score* (1771).

46 Marcello's *I primi 50 psalmi* was published in an English version in 1757 by John Garth as *The First 50 Psalms*. At Worcester, as elsewhere, *The heavens declare* is attributed to 'Ferish' who may have adapted or edited it. See Mould (1973), p. 43, who notes that one of Garth's subscribers was 'Rev Mr Fairish of Carlisle'.

47 Anthems that were shortened to their first verse and chorus were: Purcell, *O give thanks*; James Kent, *Sing, O heavens*; John Clarke-Whitfeld, *Behold, God is my salvation*; Maurice Greene, *Sing unto the Lord*; and Battishill, *I waited patiently*. The anthems by Kent and Clarke-Whitfeld seem to have been abbreviated to just the first verse on occasion, and that by Croft to the first chorus only (D4.23 Precentor's notebook).

48 A377 Attendance Book, 1830s, 28 December 1838.

In the later 1840s, adaptations of Mozart's works by the Cambridge organist John Pratt, Mendelssohn's *Cast thy burden from Elijah*, and an extract from *The Creation* by Haydn were all sung. Various compositions by cathedral musicians elsewhere, such as W H Longhurst of Canterbury and Joseph Corfe of Salisbury, also became popular. Music by the honorary canon W H Havergal was occasionally used, but he was not happy with other repertoire he heard at the cathedral. He wrote in 1846, 'when I do go I sometimes come away annoyed. The new Dean [John Peel] is too fond of trashy music and the Precentor has not the resolution to withstand the ill taste'.⁴⁹ Elsewhere he explained that he preferred the sober and dignified style of the older music to the pretty tunes that were becoming fashionable. Perhaps Charles Clark's only published anthem (Fig. 35) was an example of the music he disliked.⁵⁰

Fig. 35 The start of Charles Clark's *May the grace of Christ our Saviour* (quoted from C D Hackett, *The National Psalmist*, London, 1839, public domain)

⁴⁹ Moore (1954), p. 297, quoting a letter from W. H. Havergal to Maria Hackett, 23 September 1846 (Hackett letters at the Royal School of Church Music).

⁵⁰ Havergal (1836), p. 1.

Chants

Allen Wheeler's notebook also gives the chants used for psalms at Matins and Evensong. Almost all are from Bennett and Marshall's *Cathedral Chants* of 1829, with a very few from the slightly earlier collection by John Clarke-Whitfeld. The local composer, W. H. Havergal, was represented mainly by 'Havergal's No. 4', a particularly popular chant published in 1836; only ten years later, Havergal was writing that it had been 'sung to death all over the kingdom'. Just one chant was listed for all the psalms at each service, although occasionally this was a 'changeable' one, with major and minor-key versions. An example of the latter was on the eighth morning, when there were three psalms sung to a 'changeable' chant by the composer John Marsh. The first two of these, Psalms 38 and 39, express remorse and a yearning for divine mercy and may have been sung to the minor-key chant; the major-key version would probably have been saved for Psalm 40, expressing joyful praise for God's deliverance.

On the fifteenth evening, the choice of chant for Psalm 78 may seem surprising. On that occasion, a very simple, single chant, attributed to Thomas Tallis, was used for all seventy-three verses, which to twenty-first century ears would have been monotonous (Fig. 36).

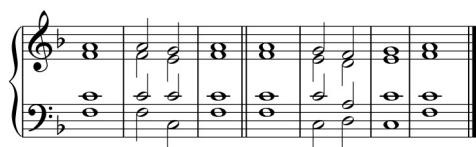


Fig. 36 Tallis's single chant used for Psalm 78 (quoted from Bennett and Marshall's *Cathedral Chants*, London, 1829, public domain)

A parallel can be seen with settings of the Preces, Responses and Litany in versions also ascribed to Tallis, which were then very much in favour.⁵¹ These simple harmonisations of fragments of plainsong, in the case of the Litany repeated many times over, have much in common with this psalm chant. But it was their very simplicity, perhaps associated with a sense of their antiquity, that was most admired. After the Worcester

51 Cole (2008), pp. 130–70.

Festival of 1842, in which the responses had been sung by two hundred voices, accompanied by the ‘full power of the organ’, one observer wrote:

The harmonies of this service of Tallis are of the plainest and most simple character; but in their Doric simplicity and breadth consist their beauty and their sublimity. There is to be found in the responses no forced modulation, no straining after effect, no attempt to surprise the ear or to captivate the senses; although in their structure they evince the most thorough mastery of the science. They are pure, solemn, devotional; in a word, they are all that such a composition should be.⁵²

Music for Holy Communion

A Communion service was celebrated each Sunday, and music was required for the responses to the Commandments (known as the *Kyries*), the gospel acclamation (the response ‘Glory be to thee O God’ after the gospel is announced), and the Creed. All of these form part of the Ante-Communion, following which the choir and most of the congregation would leave. The *Sanctus* was often sung before the Ante-Communion, and a full ‘Choral Communion’ with the *Sanctus* (and less commonly the *Gloria*) in the places they were appointed in the prayer book was becoming infrequent. This displeased the clergyman and writer, John Jebb, who commented in 1843, ‘unhappily, through the coldness of these latter times, the choral accompaniment has ceased in all but a few of our Collegiate Churches, as Durham, Exeter and Worcester’.⁵³ He was right that Choral Communions were still held at Worcester, but in fact such occasions had become rather uncommon. They included only Easter Day, Whit Sunday, Christmas Day and Ordination Sundays. On these days, two settings were listed for the Communion service, the second one commonly being Samuel Dangerfield’s Sacrament Service. Dangerfield was a lay clerk between 1790 and 1822, and his service consisted of settings of the *Sanctus* and the *Gloria*. It was copied into the partbooks in the early 1820s and is a somewhat undistinguished, four-part work, essentially homophonic in nature, with a verse section in the *Gloria*. The *Sanctus* begins with the introductory words ‘Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven’, showing

52 WJ, 22 September 1842.

53 Jebb (1843), p. 504.

that it was sung in the place set by the prayer book rather than before the Ante-Communion service.

Radical Rebuilding of the Organ—Twice

The treasurer's accounts for 1823-24 include a payment of £380 to 'Elliot for repairing Organ'.⁵⁴ The payment is quite a significant one, and the organ builder is likely to have been the well-known maker, Thomas Elliot. 'Repairing' probably meant installing a short-compass swell division and a small pedalboard. The London organist, Henry Leffler, had written out the stop list of the Worcester organ early in the century and seemed surprised to find a cathedral organ without a swell.⁵⁵ The lack was probably remedied by Elliot, as William Hill, having journeyed to Worcester in 1842, offered 'To continue the Swell down to Tenor C'.⁵⁶ Although there were sometimes steps to introduce a limited flue chorus, early swell organs often served largely as an expressive solo division, and a short compass was typical.⁵⁷ Hill also suggested that he could 'carry the pedal pipes down to CCC 16ft', implying the presence of pedals, which had been absent at the time of Leffler's list. Elliot was known for pedal pipe scaling intended to give the impression of a sixteen-foot register without incurring the cost, and this so-called 'dwarf scaling' may have been employed at Worcester.⁵⁸ Hearers were impressed by the great improvement and commented on its power and 'rich and swelling tones'.⁵⁹

Only eighteen years later, the organ was being rebuilt again, perhaps because it was still seen as inadequate for a cathedral. William Hill visited Worcester in April 1842 and hoped to install an organ in time for the Music Meeting in September. The instrument was said to include the greater part of the old one and was ready for the festival apart from the choir division.⁶⁰ Clarke's assistant, William Done, had been practising

54 A331 Treasurer's Book 1823–4, p. 20.

55 Pearce (1912), no. 32.

56 William Hill Letter Book (1838–61), pp. 115 (Box 312, British Organ Archive, Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University).

57 Thistletonwaite (1990), p. 114.

58 Thistletonwaite (1990), p. 19.

59 *Hereford Journal* (1824), 22 September, issue 2822, 'Worcester Music Festival'

60 WJ, 25 July 1894.

Bach fugues at home on a harpsichord which he had had fitted with pedals, and was able to give a creditable performance of one.⁶¹ The organ had an impressive stop list, which was published in the local newspaper the following month.⁶² The great organ included a sixteen-foot register and a good selection of upperwork, including three mixtures, and the swell had a full diapason chorus. It also had an echo cornet, which Hill would normally make ‘of the delicate scale and voicing in use for the organ of a drawing-room’. There were six pedal stops, including a five-rank sesquialtera, with a compass of over two octaves (CCC to E).⁶³

The Failing Choir and Its Causes

Charles Clarke died unexpectedly on 28th April 1844, following a stroke during Morning Prayers.⁶⁴ He was aged forty-eight or forty-nine. A tribute in the Berrow’s *Worcester Journal* commended his ‘severely classical taste and judgement in things musical, which [...] caused his opinions on such matters to be received and listened to with the utmost deference and respect’. He ‘shrank from display and elaborate execution’, and his improvised voluntaries were ‘not showy, not fantastic, but sound and classical’. The *Musical World* in May 1844 published an abridged version of this flattering obituary,⁶⁵ but in June, in arguing for a new appointment at Worcester based on merit, it gave a more honest assessment:

A more amiable, loveable being than the late Organist of Worcester Cathedral never existed. His zeal in the cause of art was much greater than appearances indicated; incessantly occupied with pupils he did

61 Add 141 Fanny Limolean memories, p. 18; WJ, 22 September 1842.

62 WJ, 27 October 1842.

63 Berrow (2021), p. 283, has suggested there was only a single octave of pedal pipes despite a wider range of pedal keys, and Hill’s estimate for £550 does mention just three pedal stops with a compass of only CCC to CC. However the final payment made to him was for £687 (A349, p. 20), which implies that some further suggestions were accepted. These were: £45 for ‘new stops’ (on the manuals); £30 ‘To carry the Pedal organ 3 stops from CC to C 4ft’; and £30 to include three extra pedal stops. All of these together would have brought the total to £655. Early published stoplists include a pedal compass reaching four notes higher, to E, and an additional pedal Bourdon, and these may account for the higher payment. The great organ extended down to CC, and not to CCC as originally planned (WJ, 27 October 1842; Hopkins (1855), p. 497).

64 WJ, 2 May 1844, issue 7379.

65 *Musical World* (1844), 19.20, 16 May.

but little to distinguish himself in his profession, nor can we say that his organ performances were by any means remarkable; how far the conduct of the choir depended on his guidance we cannot say (we rather think that the Dean and Chapter are the responsible parties in this respect) but certain it is, that throughout England there was not, is not, a worse performance of the Cathedral Service than at Worcester [...] we turn and say to the Cathedral Clergy – shame on ye, shame on ye, gentlemen, your music would hardly be tolerated in the tap-room of an ale-house! [...] The service at the Cathedral has been most disgracefully performed for years past.⁶⁶

For the writer, the malaise had spread to the whole city: 'Worcester is a declining town: on every house, nearly, we observe "*This house to let*", and on every face, "*This man to let*"'. In an editorial, the Worcester paper defended Charles Clarke, but for the choir's performance in services, it could only admit 'it is bad enough in all conscience'.⁶⁷

Fig. 37 Precentor's attendance roll, December 1832. Days with a diagonal line (dividing mornings into two) were Sundays. The list includes minor canons, the two schoolmasters, and organist and lay clerks, and the totals for six pence supplements for lay clerks are given on the left (see below) (M9.7, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

66 *Musical World* (1844), 19.24, 13 June.

67 WJ, 20 June 1844.

Some background to this indictment can be gained from cathedral archives. Attendance, recorded on pricked paper rolls between 1776 and 1848, dropped between the times of Elias Isaac and Charles Clarke (Fig. 37 and Table 3). This was quite marked for the minor canons, but the organist and precentor were also absent more often.

	11 th to 17 th Nov. 1776		12 th to 18 th Nov. 1838	
	No.	% attendance	No.	% attendance
Minor canons	8	50%	8	9%
Lay clerks	8	51%	7	75%
Choristers	10	89%	10	93%
Organist	1	100%	1	33%
Precentor	1	80%	1	6%

Table 3 Attendance of the choir at services in sample weeks of 1776 and 1838 compared

The falloff of participation by minor canons in cathedral music was a national trend. In 1762 a Worcester minor canon was to be admitted ‘if his voice and Musical Qualifications on Tryal be Approved’,⁶⁸ but during the fifty years before Charles Clarke’s death there had been a change.⁶⁹ Contrary to the cathedral statutes, minor canons started to be appointed who were unable to sing. The process was gradual: the presence of one non-singing minor canon could be accommodated if the remainder were competent, but gradually the proportions were reversed. By the 1840s it became rare to find a minor canon who had the statutory requirements—and the issue was widespread, not just affecting Worcester.

The loss of the minor canons’ contribution made the absence of any lay clerks more significant. The 1544 statutes of Henry VIII had set the number of lay clerks at ten,⁷⁰ but the number had fallen by attrition

⁶⁸ A78 Chapter Acts, 25 November 1762, election and appointment of Revd Mr John Scott as minor canon.

⁶⁹ WJ, 30 May 1844.

⁷⁰ The eight lay clerks, deacon and sub-deacon of the 1544 statutes, were treated as ten

over many years. There was a quiet reduction in the number to nine in 1696, with no mention of this in the chapter acts. In 1714, a revised set of statutes suggesting a further reduction to seven was about to be submitted by the Dean and Chapter to Queen Anne to receive royal authority, but the queen died before they could be approved by her.⁷¹ A compromise was reached, however, and the number fell to eight until June 1777, when it was reduced to seven so that a lay clerk's pay could be used to supplement the salary of the organist, Elias Isaac.⁷²

In the early years of the nineteenth century, a lay clerk's pay was about thirty pounds a year.⁷³ Figures given by Patrick Colquhoun, a Scottish statistician, for income in England and Wales during 1801–3, suggest lower-paid workers such as hawkers, pedlars, duffers, and labourers in mines and canals would receive forty pounds a year.⁷⁴ A lay clerk's income by itself therefore was barely a living wage and so needed to be supplemented by work that would fit around morning and afternoon service commitments, which was difficult to find. There were some improvements later in the century. From 1825 there was a supplement of six pence for each service attended,⁷⁵ which in 1838 was replaced by an extra annual stipend of seventeen pounds, reduced by fines for absences.⁷⁶ But a lay clerk's income remained low.

Minor canons in the eighteenth century had contributed more, and, because of this, it had occasionally been possible to grant fairly prolonged leave of absence. John Griffiths, an unusually gifted bass lay clerk, was allowed to perform as a soloist at the *Concerts of Antient Music* held at the New Rooms on Tottenham Street, London. This commitment was often for a few weeks at a time and recurred several times between the years 1785 and 1793. James Salmon, a lay clerk for nearly twenty years, was similarly given leave to be away for several weeks at Windsor

lay clerks and this was confirmed by the statutes of Charles II.

71 D862 Petition to Queen Anne; Add MS 15 Proposed Statutes; A155 Statutes of Henry VIII, Charles II and Proposed Statutes Queen Anne.

72 A78 Chapter Acts , fols 205v–206r.

73 This was made up of £20 stipend, £2 house rent, and corn rent which varied year by year. Corn rent is difficult to estimate, but later, between 1846 and 1852 the corn rent averaged £11 annually (Cathedral Commission (1854), p. 729).

74 Lindert and Williamson (1982).

75 A81 Chapter Acts, fol. 46v.

76 A377 Attendance Book.

in the 1780s, perhaps singing with the choir of St George's Chapel.⁷⁷ By the 1800s, any non-attendance was becoming more of a problem. No prolonged absences were being permitted, but neither the pay supplements for attendance nor the fines for absence worked well. There were still failures, with bleak comments by prebendaries: 'No Lay Clerks on the Precentor's side & only two on the Dean's —the absentees to be fined'; 'only two Lay Clerks present (Messrs. Shelton & Rickhuss)—This is very unseemly'; 'It seems impossible under the present system creditably to carry on the Choral Service'.⁷⁸

It was difficult for anyone to deny that the choir was failing, and this was bound to affect morale. The local newspaper was in no doubt about the cause.⁷⁹ Cathedral choirs, it believed, were shamefully underpaid. Their stipends were so miserably low that they were driven to other means even to eke out an existence. As a result a full choir could only be mustered perhaps three or four times a week. The young music publisher Alfred Novello was even more forthright:

The clergy will probably soon find that it will be for *their own interest* to alter the system of tasteless apathy, careless indifference, and avaricious meanness which have so long characterized the behaviour of the generality of them, in what relates to the musical department of the service, as well as their shabby, grasping conduct respecting the funds, which ought to be appropriated to the remuneration of the members of the choirs that have been subjected to their management. The slothful and useless drones amongst the clerical body, who have hitherto been allowed to enjoy such valuable benefices and large incomes for doing little or nothing themselves, will perhaps find it advisable, for their own sakes, to consider whether the public, who have been so much enlightened lately upon certain matters, will consent much longer to pay so high a price, or *any price at all*, for the meagre and uninteresting musical service which is provided for them by these selfish and niggardly, but impolitic and short-sighted persons.⁸⁰

Another cause for the decline in some cathedrals was cited by John Peace in his 1839, *Apology for Cathedral Service*: the impact of lay clerks serving

⁷⁷ He later became a lay clerk at Windsor and gentleman of the Chapel Royal (30 November 1789).

⁷⁸ M9.11 Attendance roll, September 1838; A377.

⁷⁹ WJ, 20 June 1844.

⁸⁰ Purcell (1832), vol. 1, p. 43.

into old age with failing voices. However, from 1828 on, Worcester had been tackling this problem. In that year Samuel Dangerfield was granted a retirement annuity based on his last seven years' income, and since that time a further four lay clerks had also received pensions.

Change had to come, and many regretted the failure to initiate it from within the Church. The unfair distribution of wealth was criticised increasingly, but the shifting public opinion did not stop senior churchmen fighting their corner. Preaching in the cathedral before the Duchess of Kent and Princess Victoria in 1830, Dean George Murray argued against any reallocation of funds to poorer clergy,⁸¹ and the next year he was again out of step with many when he rejected the Reform Bill in his other role as Bishop of Rochester. The failure of this to be passed in the Lords led to national fury, with rioting in Bristol and similar unrest in Worcester's High Street. Ultimately a third Reform Bill was passed, although not until two years later, and at about that time the government set up the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Commission to remedy the funding anomalies. At length, this led to the Cathedrals Act of 1840, reducing the number of canons to four and setting salaries for the dean and canons.

An anonymous writer in the *Musical World* of 1844, calling himself 'Q', implied that Worcester's musical failure owed itself, at least in part, to the inadequacy of the organist.⁸² How fair was this? Charles Clarke had been appointed on the basis of his remarkable keyboard skills as a young man, and it is true that despite this early promise, there are no later accounts of his virtuosity as an organist. Those who defended him believed his 'smooth, quiet, unpretentious style' was able to elevate the heart to devotion.⁸³ Newspaper reports of the music festival tended to emphasise his courtesy more than any inspiring performance, mentioning 'the worthy and unostentatious conductor, our Organist, Mr Clarke',⁸⁴ 'his steady mode of conducting the performances', and 'the obliging politeness with which he has behaved towards everyone during the present festival'.⁸⁵ Attendance records suggest he attended

81 WJ, 16 September 1830.

82 *Musical World* (1844), 19, 13 June.

83 WJ, 20 June 1844.

84 WJ, 20 September 1827.

85 *The Analyst* (184), 10.29, 300.

barely more than a third of choral services in the cathedral. This may have been because of teaching commitments, but it does not really bear comparison with the record of Elias Isaac, who had rarely missed a service, despite presumably having a similar burden of teaching. Neither did he compose much for the choir, sending his first work for publication in 1838 with the comment, 'I have been twenty-five years organist of Worcester Cathedral, and that what is now before you is the only music I have in that time presumed to put on paper'.⁸⁶ However, whatever were Charles Clarke's abilities, it would be unfair to lay the blame for the failing choir at his door.

'Q' argued for a new organist to be chosen on merit but suspected this would not happen. He had heard that a local musician favoured by the choir was to be appointed, and he concluded, 'We hate to see mediocrity successful, even when talent has not been opposed, but where the former is triumphant over the latter, the result is painful indeed'. Talent had indeed been opposed; in fact, some significant musicians had applied for the position. Probably the most prominent of these was Samuel Sebastian Wesley.⁸⁷ He was the leading church musician of the time and had already been organist of Exeter and Hereford Cathedrals, despite sometimes being considered a difficult man to work with. Zechariah Buck, who had been organist of Norwich Cathedral for twenty-five years, was another applicant. He was experienced and believed by many to be the preeminent choirtrainer of his generation. In addition, there were eight other candidates. Some of these may have had great charisma and ability, but William Done had served as deputy for nearly a decade and as Clarke's apprentice for seven years before that. As with Thomas Pitt over a half-century before, the expectation was that he would take over when the senior post became vacant. A week later, an announcement was made confirming 'Q's' suspicions, and William Done was to be the next cathedral organist.⁸⁸

In the 1840s, the musician and lecturer Edward Taylor wrote about the poor social position, low self esteem and sapped confidence of lay clerks:

86 Letter to Charles Hackett, 2 December 1838 (*Musical World* (1844), 19, 189).

87 WJ, 20 June 1844.

88 WJ, 20 June 1844; *Musical World* (1844), 19.26, 27 June.

Almost spurned by the very vergers: 'with bated breath and whispering humbleness' cringing to the Dean's butler as an acknowledged superior, or receiving orders in a Residentiary's hall from his footboy. There exists not a class in England more degraded and bereft of the port and dignity of manhood than the men by whom the daily worship of God is now carried on in our Cathedrals⁸⁹

Some of the lack of self respect and depressed morale is implicit in glib comments made by lay clerks in 1836. The chapter clerk had written formally to the precentor on behalf of the subdean and prebendaries, asking why some of the lay clerks had absented themselves from services. The precentor, Allen Wheeler, noted their replies on the back of the letter:

Mr Williams – cannot do his Duty in the Cath. if he attends before Breakfast on Sunday Morning
 Mr Holmes – did not hear the Bell the Wind blew so loud
 Mr Fenny – Bad Cold
 Mr Henry Shelton – Ditto
 Mr Shelton – vide Roll⁹⁰
 Mr Holloway – confined to his Room
 Mr Rogers – had cold afraid to venture out in the morning. Sunday Evensong went with a new married Friend to Church.⁹¹

The flippant remarks betray a careless indifference and lack of pride: perhaps the words of demoralised men 'bereft of the port and dignity of manhood'.

The causes of failure therefore were multiple: the loss of singing minor canons; falling numbers of lay clerk places; inadequate lay clerk pay with barely time to manage a second job; a lack of an inspired leader; a loss of lay clerks' social position and self-respect; and a spiral of inadequate performance and ebbing morale. The challenge to reverse this trend was formidable but needed urgent attention.

89 Taylor (1845), p. 57 (with quote from Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 1, Scene 3).

90 The attendance roll shows that Joseph Shelton had missed very few services.

91 M9.9 Attendance Rolls (1835–6).

9. Queen Victoria's Reign: Changes after the Cathedrals Act of 1840 (1840–1900)

A failing choir was only one of the concerns that cried out for attention in the years following the Cathedrals Act. The dean, George Murray, was absent for most of the year, working in his other role as Bishop of Rochester; the chapter were increasingly seen as standing apart and withdrawn from the diocese; many services were very badly attended, particularly by working men conscious of their inferior social position; and the fabric was decayed, salaries wretched, and chorister education scant. The outlook was challenging, but these issues needed facing, and in 1845 a new dean arrived showing energy and enthusiasm. Possibly, in the wake of the Cathedrals Act, he might be able to reverse the decline.

The new dean was John Peel, but before his appointment, a new bishop was translated to Worcester in 1841. This was the strongly evangelical Henry Pepys. Despite the unsettling religious controversy sparked by the Oxford Tractarians and the ills of the cathedral, Pepys managed to be upbeat about the achievements of the Church. In particular, speaking to clergy and to ordinands, he highlighted the proliferation of newly-built churches and the greater backing for church and missionary societies, both of which had been well supported by the laity.¹ It was said that Pepys was rarely seen in the cathedral apart from attending ordinations and visitations,² and he strongly supported the division of labour between a bishop and a

1 Pepys (1842), p. 6; Pepys (1845a), p. 5.

2 Add MS 128 Memories of John Randall, p. 12.

dean. This, he believed, allowed him to care for the spiritual interests of the diocese without being involved in the ‘gossiping visiting’ prevailing in a cathedral city.³

Dean John Peel was better-known to local people than Pepys. A popular man in the city, he was on good terms with all and happy to see anyone without formality. He was wealthy and frequently seen in his open carriage passing through the High Street, bowing to those who saluted him on either side. His two dalmatians often followed the carriage.⁴ The Evangelicals formed the dominant party in the Anglican Church, but there are signs that John Peel was less radical than the bishop. He encouraged the use in festival processions of an immense staff with a silver head, similar to ones used by beadle in French cathedrals;⁵ he allowed the use of the rather high church *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in the 1860s; and even gave a highly ornate reredos, designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott, in memory of his wife.

To help their acceptance, the changes proposed by the Cathedrals Act of 1840 were phased in gradually.⁶ The residence requirements rose from four to eight months a year for the dean and from two months to three for canons. However, these increases only applied to those who were newly appointed and not to clergy already in office. The dean and prebendaries were allowed to hold a benefice each, but the patronage of these would be vested in the bishop, and the minor canons could also hold one, as long as it was within six miles of the cathedral. The new scheme included four prebendaries and between two and six minor canons at the discretion of the Dean and Chapter, but again, the change was not immediate. Every third vacancy for a prebendary would be filled, the others would not, and these stalls would be suspended. As a result the number of prebendaries did not fall to four until 1854, and in that year the Dean and Chapter decided to opt for four minor canons with salaries of £150 a year, and submitted this proposal to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for approval.⁷

3 Cathedral Commision (1854), p. 596 (Letter of Bishop Henry Pepys, 13 June 1853).

4 Add MS 128, pp. 14ff; Add MS 137 Memories of James Smith; Add MS 131 Memories of Fanny Limolean, pp. 2ff.

5 Add MS 128, p. 8.

6 See <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/3-4/113/enacted>

7 A295 Chapter Acts, p. 94, 25 November 1854.

For years the money originally intended for an eighth lay clerk's place had been used to supplement the organist's pay, but on William Done's appointment, the Dean and Chapter diverted the money back to its intended purpose.⁸ Despite doing this, they managed to increase the organist's overall salary. The eight lay clerks were supplemented by four supernumeraries,⁹ fines for absences were discontinued, and some years later the release of the capitular estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in return for a guaranteed income gave a chance to improve lay clerks' pay. Their salary was increased from fifty to seventy pounds a year.¹⁰ The appointment of minor canons also received attention, and care was taken to appoint candidates who were at least able to chant satisfactorily. In 1862 eleven of a large number of applicants were interviewed in the deanery, out of whom five were selected for a further test in the cathedral, no doubt to assess their singing ability. When the Revd William Rayson was appointed, it was noted that he was a tenor and well accustomed to chanting.¹¹

John Peel was well respected in the town, but in general the relationship between the cathedral clergy and local citizens in the early and middle years of the century was poor. A writer in the *Church Times*, looking back from the years after the Victorian restoration, wrote about Worcester:

relations between the Cathedral staff and the rest of the city were practically as distant as the very poles. It was deemed an impertinence for a local vicar to invite a canon to preach for him. The barrier between the City fold and Cathedral chapter was complete; and their sleepy round of services was attended exclusively by the privileged few.¹²

The problem was not unique to Worcester. More widely, cathedral canons were seen as isolating themselves from the diocese and avoiding the usual work of clergy. Instead they seemed to block out the wants of the age, and preferred to maintain their rights and privileges.¹³

⁸ Add MS 71 'A Record of Some of the Principal Events', p. 27.

⁹ *Great Western Advertiser* (1845), 11 January.

¹⁰ Cathedral Commission (1854), p. 448; Add MS 71, p. 27 (1860).

¹¹ Add MS 71, p. 48.

¹² *Church Times* (1886), 19 March, 214.

¹³ Alford (1868), p. 176.

The clergy may have been aloof, but the building itself was attracting more attention, with a growing interest in Gothic architecture and the sense of religious awe that it could inspire. Improved access to the cathedral for local people followed a decision of 1858 to admit all without charge to view the nave, and a sexton stood by to show other parts of the church on payment of a gratuity.¹⁴

Certain services were also becoming remarkably popular. Across the country, Whit Monday became a day for gatherings of Sunday Schools of both Anglican and Dissenting churches. At the cathedral, the custom had started in 1823, with a few hundred children attending Evensong and a sermon, afterwards processing to their schoolrooms for cakes and tea. Numbers grew, so that by 1846 there were between two and three thousand, and the honorary canon W H Havergal was proud that in this year he had provided both a psalm chant and an anthem for the occasion. The psalm had been chanted antiphonally by the children. In Havergal's words, 'excepting a little unsteadiness in the [anthem], (caused by the country children attempting to join), the whole were performed with admirable precision and reflected great credit upon the patience and tact of their tutor, Mr Sefton, who acted as conductor'.¹⁵

In 1858 a new series of summer Sunday afternoon sermons was started, particularly targeting working-class people, who would normally avoid church services. On Whit Sunday, the nave, usually empty, was filled with chairs, a pulpit was sited against a pier on the south side, and a small platform was placed at the east for the choir (Fig. 38). Following Evensong in the quire, the congregation and choir moved to the nave, joining an assembly that had already gathered there, so that the total numbered about seven hundred. The Old Hundredth Psalm was sung, and the dean preached. The service ended with the Evening Hymn and a blessing. The cathedral clergy were gratified by the success of this venture; the dean was thought to have preached well, his voice had been heard throughout the nave, and the project had been well received. The series continued throughout the summer with different speakers. It attracted congregations of over a thousand and even nearly twice that if there was a popular preacher, and a similar series was held each summer for several years.¹⁶

14 Add MS 71, p. 8.

15 A6.29 Havergal Scrapbook, letter 9 June 1846; WJ, 4 June 1846.

16 Add MS 71, pp. 5ff, pp. 11ff, pp. 24ff, pp. 31ff, pp. 43ff; *Hereford Times* (1858), 3



Fig. 38 The nave in 1861 set out for a summer Sunday afternoon sermon (published by Rock & Co., London, public domain)

For services taking place in the quire, seating arrangements were quite strict. Bishop Henry Pepys supported the idea of family pews in parish churches, believing that maintaining domestic groups and privacy helped true devotion, but this contrasted with the segregation at the cathedral, as recalled by one member of the congregation:

The seats in the choir had locks, the vergers had the keys, they took you to your appropriate seat and locked you in. The sexes were divided. The "swells" sat in the stalls; tradesmen in the corporation seats; their wives in the seats opposite or the galleries; servants etc. in the seats nearest to the altar; seats underneath the stalls and the Bishop's throne to the wives etc. of the cathedral clergy; the organ gallery to the organist's friends; galleries on either side of the choir to ladies.¹⁷

April.

17 Pepys (1845b); Add MS 128 Memories of John Randall.

Not everyone approved of the arrangements. A journalist writing in 1845 recalled his first visit. He had been received by the sexton 'as a Jew would an uncircumcised Philistine', and the pew door had been opened with the grace of a turnkey admitting a felon to his cell. The segregation of sexes also frustrated him. He believed men would be as liable to impurity of thought when facing the females as when sitting by them, and married couples' prayers had no reason to deteriorate if they were offered together.¹⁸ The Dean and Chapter must have been aware of the impression sometimes given by sextons. They later required of them 'that the utmost civility and attention be shewn to all persons attending Divine Service and the greatest readiness to provide them proper accommodation without fee or payment'.¹⁹

The ordering and scheduling of services changed around mid-century. Weekday Early Prayers ceased, and the gap between first and second services on Sundays was abolished because of very poor attendance at Matins.²⁰ An odd quirk in the performance of Matins or Evensong, perhaps unique to this time, was recorded by the organist William Done's daughter. She recalled that, while the precentor announced the anthem, senior choristers would hurry about the congregation finding find the place in books for College Green residents. For this 'delicate attention' they were rewarded with a 'Christmas box'.²¹

Unfortunately, at about the same time, two visitors gave rather unfavourable reports of services they had attended, the first appearing in the *Ecclesiologist* of 1851 and coinciding with the preparations for the Music Festival. The sight of cap-wearing workmen erecting ugly platforms at both ends of the nave did not create a good first impression, and the visitor's perception of what followed was no better.²² After larking about amongst the loose beams of the orchestra platform, the choristers attended, but the service included no music. There were only two in the congregation and the visitor found the service bleak, dreary, and uninspiring. He left the cathedral 'chilled, cold, sorrowful and dead at heart.'

18 WJ, 21 August 1845.

19 A297 Chapter Order Drafts, p. 29, 10 May 1867.

20 Cathedral Commission (1854), p. 448; WH, Saturday 28 November 1857; *Notes and Queries* (1870), 4.5, 277.

21 Add MS 141 Fanny Limolean memories, p. 15.

22 *Ecclesiologist* (1852), 10, 77–8.

The second visit came in the following year. It was by Lowell Mason, a leading American church musician.²³ On a Saturday afternoon he heard prayers, the litany and service recited in plainchant, with responses by the choir. He was disappointed by the chanted psalms, which he found too fast, lacking good ensemble, and carelessly enunciated. He found no appropriate emphasis and a lack of expressiveness, but did enjoy the closing voluntary: an introduction and fugue 'played in excellent style'.

Both of these accounts can be seen as polemical, with writers aiming to spotlight their own beliefs. The *Ecclesiologist* represented a movement that abhorred both perfunctory ritual and irreverent behaviour in church. The visitor was unlikely to brook excuses for a said service in the run-up to the Music Festival, for which of course the presence of the choristers was superfluous. Lowell Mason was striving to educate others in his approach to chanting, and in particular the need for clear diction and expressive use of pause and emphasis. Both visitors thus gathered grist for their own agendas in the faults they found at Worcester.

Actually, there are indications that the boys' singing was reasonably good. There was an emphasis on solo singing, and good soloists found opportunities to sing elsewhere in the city. From 1849 for ten years, the choristers put on a concert in the hall of the Natural History Society in November or December, with charges for admission. Largely based around the singing of secular songs by soloists or by two or three boys, these concerts were immensely popular with the public, who crowded the hall in their hundreds. No doubt part of the attraction for the choristers was the substantial Christmas bonus that they earned from the admission charges. A particularly good solo boy would get opportunities to sing at other secular concerts in the city: for two years Thomas Holloway, the son of a bass lay clerk, often took part as a soloist in concerts of the Worcester Harmonic Society and the Worcester Philharmonic Society. These were held in the City and County Library, the Natural History Rooms, and later in the new hall in the Cornmarket.²⁴ The boys also shone at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival, and one reviewer remarked on the 'brilliancy of the trebles, especially one or two boys of the Worcester Cathedral Choir'.²⁵

23 Mason (1854), letter 1: London, 9 January 1852.

24 WJ, 1847 (13 January, 21 January, 16 December); 1848 (6 January, 20 January, 23 February, 4 May, 6 July, 34 November); 1849 (22 February, 25 October, 22 November).

25 WC, 21 August 1867.

In 1877 the Dean and Chapter, for unknown reasons, requested a report on the boys' singing from Walter Parratt, Precentor, Organist, and Master of the Choristers at Magdalen College, Oxford. The report was encouraging, although Parratt did notice a 'little harshness' owing to the boys' Worcestershire dialect.²⁶ Nevertheless, William Done did not hesitate to employ choristers from other choirs, presumably when his own boys were not sufficiently capable. Earlier that year, two of Walter Parratt's choristers at Magdalen College had sung treble solos in Bach's *St Matthew's Passion* at Worcester, and for the Worcester 'Mock Festival' two years earlier, Done had engaged two boys from New College Choir, Oxford, and another from St George's Chapel, Windsor.²⁷

The Victorian Cathedral Restoration

In the earlier part of the century, there had been increasing concern about the condition of the building. The memories of several men who worked or worshipped there have been recorded and were rather unfavourable. The organist William Done was uncharacteristically outspoken: 'the Cathedral was a miserably cold and dirty place—it could not have been worse'.²⁸ Others confirmed how cold the cathedral was in winter, and the dean required a hot water bottle to be placed in his stall or before his seat in the sanctuary if he was the celebrant.²⁹ The handsome Painswick stone pavement was beginning to age, and a lay clerk recalled it being much broken and uneven. It was not often swept, and as a result was very dusty.³⁰ The outside of the building was remembered as 'very plain and patched' with decaying stonework, and the inside was still whitewashed throughout.³¹

There were some attempts at cosmetic improvement. In 1818 the treasurer, the Revd John St John, had arranged for arches of composition to be applied to the west side of the organ screen. Above these, the fourteenth-century carved miserere seats, having been removed from

26 M6.7 Parratt report, 23 July 1877.

27 WJ, 31 March 1877; WC, 25 September 1875.

28 WC, 24 August 1895.

29 Add MS 128 John Randall memories from around 1855.

30 Add MS 137 James Smith, lay clerk, memories.

31 Add MS 128.

the stalls, were fixed in a freize and then painted to simulate stone.³² Walls had been patched with cement onto which lines were scribed to imitate ashlar, but serious structural problems appeared, with stone groining separating from the walls, the nave sides listing outwards, and roof timbers shifting from their correct positions.³³

Money had been spent each year in attempts to remedy problems, and this outlay increased in the 1850s. For about twenty years there was much upheaval and disruption, while more radical work was overseen by the architect, Abraham Edward Perkins, with advice from George Gilbert Scott.³⁴ On three occasions, for varying periods, services had to be moved from the quire to the nave. Finally, there was a move to the Lady Chapel before the grand reopening in April 1874.

The longest displacement of services was to the nave in 1867.³⁵ An altar was installed at the west end, with a pulpit and temporary choir stalls. William Hill moved the organ to the west end of the north aisle, and the congregation faced west.³⁶ The arrangement was not entirely satisfactory. A correspondent wrote to the paper complaining of inaudible sermons and lessons, a shortage of hymn books, and filthy floor and seats. He also claimed that 'large portions of the congregation' left before the sermon because of difficulty hearing it.³⁷ William Done was unhappy too: 'owing to the position of the organ we find it very difficult to accompany the choir nicely', he wrote to the Dean and Chapter, 'while we hear the singers on the opposite side of the church distinctly, the voices of those who sit under the Organ are heard very imperfectly [...] it has been the cause of many failures'.³⁸

Of most benefit for the congregation were the introduction of Gurney stoves to heat the building in 1864 and gas lighting in the quire and nave ten years later.³⁹ The stoves were fuelled by coke, which was

³² George Gilbert Scott's comment in 1863 was, 'I need hardly say that the existing screen is a very worthless structure' (GB-WO 705.349 BA4732/4/vi/1). The freize is shown in Britton (1835) but not in Wild (1823) so must have been applied between these dates.

³³ Engel (2007), pp. 43–6.

³⁴ Lockett (1978).

³⁵ WJ, 8 June 1867.

³⁶ F1209 Letter of William Hill, 13 May 1867.

³⁷ WC, 5 April 1871.

³⁸ M6.1 Letter of William Done, 17 November 1869.

³⁹ Add MS 71, p. 62.

loaded through a door on the side, while water was poured into a trough round the bottom. The results were received approvingly; winter congregations were said to be more numerous, and a newspaper writer observed that the temperature had been altered 'from that of an ice-house to a comfortable atmosphere'.⁴⁰

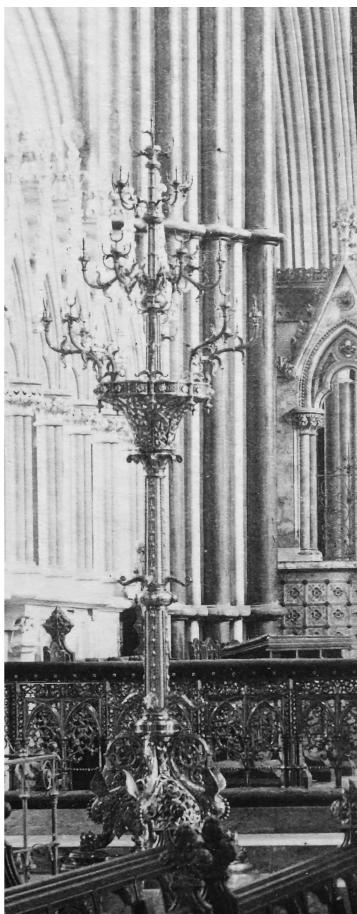


Fig. 39 A gas standard made by Hardman's of Birmingham and gas jets along the nave triforium (photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

40 WJ, 4 February 1865. Temperature measurements during the winter of 1941–2 gave readings of 46 to 48° Farenheight (8 to 9° Celsius) with these stoves, but the quire was noted to be the coldest area (Add MS 239a Notes of Custos).

For lighting, the quire had relied on a suspended, brass eight-limbed candelabrum, candles in tin sconces over the stalls and in the galleries, and, for the choir, hinged brass candlesticks that could be moved snake-wise to light the music.⁴¹ For the reopening of the cathedral after its restoration, eight gas standards were fixed in the quire and seven in the nave, and gas jets were installed above the arches in the nave (Fig. 39).⁴² The assistant organist, Edgar Day, later commented, 'the light was indifferent, but it certainly raised the temperature, and the effect looking from under the tower to the west end was immensely impressive. The lights were dimmed during the sermon'.⁴³

There was great celebration at the cathedral's reopening after the restoration was completed. The *Worcester Journal* believed that 'never perhaps, in this ancient city of Worcester, has popular joy been so widespread and deep as during this memorable week'.⁴⁴ The choir was supplemented with singers of choirs from Oxford, Windsor, Birmingham, Hereford, and Eton. The town had been garnished with flowers and greenery, and Venetian masts stood in rows along the High Street and Foregate Street, with evergreen festoons stretched between them. Coats of arms had been painted on buildings, flags hung from windows, and triumphal arches stood in thoroughfares. Most prominent of these was an arch in Bridge Street, which was marked with a D and topped by a coronet to honour and thank Lord Dudley for his munificent gifts towards the restoration.

New Initiatives Following the Victorian Restoration

Any impetus for development and innovation had been slowed by the twenty years of restoration work, but completion of this gave an opportunity for new initiatives. One of these was the founding of a voluntary choir to sing at Sunday evening nave services.⁴⁵ The new service would take the place of the summer afternoon nave sermons that had been forced to stop in 1863 because of the renovation work.

41 Add MS 137.

42 WJ, 26 August 1871.

43 *Worcester Cathedral Voluntary Choir, 1874–1974*, ed. Eric C. M. Baker, p. 10.

44 WJ, 11 April 1874.

45 A298 Chapter Acts, fol. 18r, 31 July 1874.

The popularity of these had shown how much they were valued and, in a class-ridden society, they had helped to draw in members of the lower classes and bridge the gap between the cathedral clergy and the local community. The choir's first service, on Sunday, October 11th 1874, was so well attended that some of the congregation had to stand. The occasion set the pattern for the future: large congregations, a sermon, and a parish church style of service, with psalms and canticles sung to chants, and hymns. As an encouragement for the choir's unpaid duties, the Dean and Chapter funded an annual excursion. The venues were different for adults and boys, but travel in large brakes or carriages, or by train gave what was for many a rare opportunity to visit such places as Witley Court, the city of Gloucester, and Aston Park and Museum.

A second initiative was the building of a new organ. It was sited in the north quire aisle using most of the pipework of the 1842 William Hill instrument that had stood on the screen. While on the screen, that organ had continued to be maintained by Hill; in 1845 he had altered its pitch, and eight years later had changed the temperament.⁴⁶ It was boarded up for dust protection in 1861,⁴⁷ but the year before Hill had also extended the compass of the swell down from C to CC.⁴⁸ Deciding where to site the new organ after the screen was removed was difficult; in fact nowhere was ideal, and the north quire aisle was only decided after years of discussion.⁴⁹ A new case was designed by George Gilbert Scott and made by the Lambeth company of Farmer and Brindley. It was ready by March 1872, and the organ was completed just under a year later.⁵⁰ William Hill had died three years before, and the project had been completed by his son Thomas, who had taken over the company. It used much of the pipework of the old instrument, which had been admired for being 'very fine and mellowed'.⁵¹ Of the thirty-nine stops, eight were new, three old ones had been removed, and there was a new tremulant.

It became clear quite quickly that this rebuilt organ, sited in the quire aisle, was not going to be adequate to accompany nave services,

⁴⁶ A352 Treasurer's Book (1844–5), p. 20; A360 Treasurer's Book (1852–3), p. 17.

⁴⁷ WJ, 17 August 1861.

⁴⁸ Add MS 71, p. 22.

⁴⁹ Berrow (2021), pp. 285–89.

⁵⁰ Letters from organ builder: F1336, F1337, F1350.

⁵¹ WJ, 11 April 1874; Butcher (1981), pp. 18ff.

particularly when there were very large congregations. In February 1874, even before the reopening ceremonies, the Earl of Dudley had applied to the Dean and Chapter for permission to erect a second organ 'in some part of the nave or South Transept'.⁵² Agreement was reached, and Thomas Hill's company started work in the south transept in November.⁵³ Opinions on the eventually completed instrument were mixed. An independent organ consultant, Walter Joy of Leeds, examining it eleven years later, called it 'a splendid organ, thoroughly well made and sound in all vital parts; characterised by a tone eminently "Cathedral" and capable of accompanying a large body of choral voices'.⁵⁴ Some, though, found it 'rough and coarse', although Samuel Sebastian Wesley was able to show a more attractive sweetness when he played it for the 'Mock Festival' of 1875.⁵⁵ Unfortunately by the 1880s, the action was giving problems.⁵⁶ Hill found that ciphers had needed springs added to the action 'in all directions', which had made the touch stiff and irregular.⁵⁷ He believed it was a simple matter to remedy this, but a writer looking back in 1896 commented, "'Unsatisfactory both in tone and mechanism' is a comparatively mild description of the qualities of the organ, whose freaks were known to most of those who frequented the Sunday evening services'.⁵⁸ Despite these concerns, tradition has it that William Done's successor, Hugh Blair, used the Hill transept organ to première Elgar's Organ Sonata on July 8th 1895.

Ritualist Controversies

Some changes that could be regarded as Romish had to be made with care to avoid offending public opinion. Bishop Pepys was particularly cautious about the introduction of a cross or candles on altars, advising parish clergy in 1857 to 'follow after the things which make for peace'.⁵⁹ At the cathedral, candles were not used until Easter 1881, and an

52 A298, 21 February 1874.

53 WJ, 28 November 1874.

54 M5.3 Walter Joye report 1886.

55 WC, 21 April 1875; WJ, 25 September 1875.

56 M5.2 Nicholson report 1884.

57 M5.4 Hill reply to Joye report 1886.

58 WC, 12 September 1896.

59 WH, 11 July 1857.

altar cross of silver gilt, decorated with crystals, was presented by an honorary canon two years later.⁶⁰ Flowers also had the potential to be controversial, and a newspaper correspondent of 1883 condemned Canon Butler for ‘creeping craftiness’ in introducing the cross and flower containers to the altar and hoped that the dean would ‘maintain the old lines of *moderation* for which the cathedral has ever been distinguished’.⁶¹ A few years later though, a new dean, John Gott, a conservative and Anglo-Catholic (a label he accepted)⁶², was appealing to the public to bring flowers to decorate the church for Easter, and altar flowers were becoming usual at this time of year.⁶³

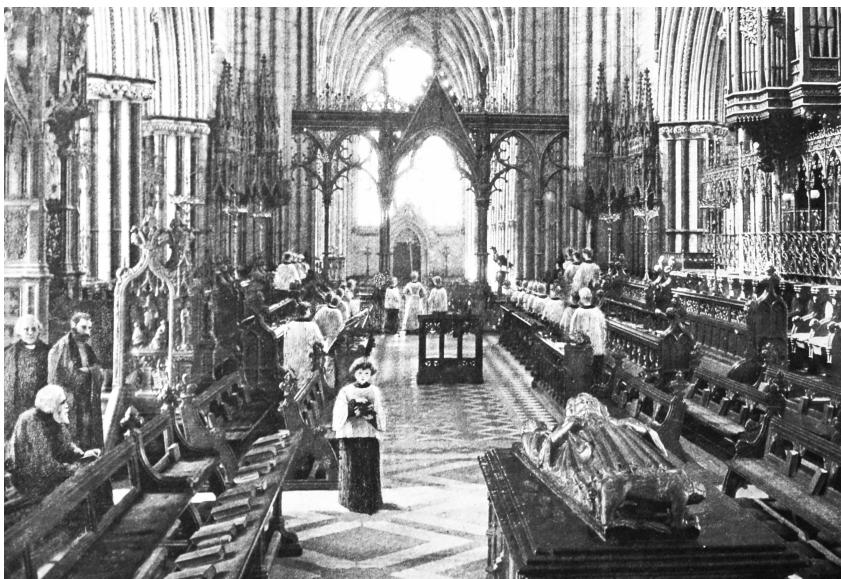


Fig. 40 Photograph of the choir leaving the stalls in 1895. Note the ‘white jackets’, the gas standards, and the gilded effigy of King John (photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

Vestments and choir attire could also be contentious. Before the cathedral restoration, choristers and lay clerks wore surplices over their everyday

60 WC, 23 April 1881; WC, 28 April 1883; A298 Chapter Acts, pp. 109,113.

61 WC, 22 December 1883.

62 Lock (2004).

63 WJ, 9 April 1887; Add MS 137.

clothes. These were long and full and fastened with a single button at the collar. For Lent the boys changed to black gowns. Cassocks were viewed with suspicion as a step towards popery by some but were introduced in 1880,⁶⁴ and the 'full and plenteous' surplices were replaced by what one disapproving critic called 'white jackets', which were much shorter (see Fig. 40).⁶⁵

By the end of the century, the cathedral had adopted further practices that some regarded as ritualistic: clergy vestments that varied to fit the church calendar; altar coverings that also changed with the season; two lighted candles on the retable; genuflexions toward the east; unleavened (wafer) bread; and the singing of the *Benedictus* and *Agnus Dei* at the celebration of the Eucharist. There were objections, but some were delighted, and one visitor wrote:

England may boast of larger cathedrals, yet there is not one in which the divine offices are performed with greater reverence, or where all things are kept in greater decency and order than in the beautiful 'Church of Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary of Worcester'⁶⁶

Bach's Passion Music

A significant innovation was the introduction of Bach's passion music in the days before Easter. In William Done's early years, there were no choral services or other music in the cathedral from Monday to Saturday of Holy Week. Later there were sung services, but this new enterprise started in 1876.⁶⁷ No doubt inspired by liturgical performances in London at St Paul's Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, parts of Bach's *Passion according to St Matthew* were performed at four of the Evensongs, where they took the place of the anthem. There had already been well-received performances of this work by S. S. Wesley at the 1871 Gloucester meeting of the three choirs and again by William Done himself at the Worcester festival the next year, and the music was becoming more familiar. Other cathedrals had experimented with liturgical performances of it during

⁶⁴ Add MS 137 Memories of James Smith, lay clerk; A298, 28 February 1880.

⁶⁵ WJ, 7 September 1895, letter to the editor.

⁶⁶ *Church Times* (1898), 8 July.

⁶⁷ Add MS 137.

Holy Week, including Canterbury and Oxford Cathedrals,⁶⁸ and with familiarity public acceptance had grown. There was now less tendency to dismiss it as 'dry and heavy', as had happened at Sterndale Bennet's pioneering British performances in the 1850s.⁶⁹

The music at Worcester was sung by the cathedral choir, supplemented by members of the Philharmonic Society to make a total of about sixty singers, and accompanied by the organ. Soloists were appointed from the choir.⁷⁰ The precentor, Edward Vine Hall, believed that 'the old Philharmonic certainly shone in its chorus. If there was not much "light and shade" in its singing, there was plenty of earnestness and vigour'.⁷¹ Liturgical use of the passion music was to continue until well into the twentieth century.

Educating the Choristers

For years there had been concerns about the poor education of choristers. In 1852 the Dean and Chapter had appointed a somewhat confusingly named 'master of the choristers' from amongst the lay clerks to teach the choristers their schoolwork, removing them from the College School.⁷² Part of the old deanery had been demolished in 1846,⁷³ but enough remained to provide a classroom. William Done's daughter later recalled that the arrangement did not work well. After eight years, the choristers were taken back into the school and supported there by the appointment of a third master to teach them.⁷⁴

In the later 1870s, the problem was worsened by an ill-considered decision to move summer Evensongs from 4.15pm to 3pm.⁷⁵ This curtailed the choristers' school day to barely two hours. The headmaster, Maurice Day, had the change reversed, but a more radical solution had to wait until 1881, when the Ecclesiastical Commission approved funding

⁶⁸ John Bull, 15 March 1873; *Oxford Journal* (1873), 1 March.

⁶⁹ *Illustrated London News* (1854), 25 April 1854.

⁷⁰ WJ, 15 April 1876.

⁷¹ WH, 24 August 1895.

⁷² A295 Chapter Acts, p. 42.

⁷³ A81 Chapter Acts, fols 209v–214v, 216v.

⁷⁴ Add MS 141 Fanny Limolean memories, p. 16; Add MS 71, pp. 20–1.

⁷⁵ A298 Chapter Acts, April 1876; M6.9 Precentor's Report 1878.

for a choir school.⁷⁶ Probably as significant as the funding was the arrival of the Revd Herbert Hall Woodward as a new minor canon, whose enthusiasm and judgement were important in establishing a new school. Woodward was a bachelor who had studied at Cuddesdon Theological College and also held a music degree from Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He became the first warden of the school. A resident master was also appointed, and a house on the Green previously occupied by the vicar of St Peter's was allocated for it (Fig. 41). The current choristers were admitted, with parents paying no fees during a three-year transition stage, and throughout this time funds were contributed by various donors and by the Revd H H Woodward himself.⁷⁷ Fees were set at thirty pounds a year for probationers, reducing to twenty pounds on election as choristers, and English, Latin, French, and Mathematics were taught, as well as singing.⁷⁸

The written aims in starting the school were 'to have the choristers at all times under proper supervision and to ensure their obtaining an efficient education'.⁷⁹ There appears to have been another purpose, however: to appoint choristers from a higher social class than before, and this was to become a significant change. The intent was unwritten, but probably not secret. The vicar of St John's wrote to the chapter clerk:

St John's Vicarage

Worcester

April 24 1882

Dear Mr Hooper,

The Masons of West Boulton Cottages, Happy Land, are a respectable family—and church people—but if you want to get boys of the middle class they are hardly that. What is the arrangement under the new plan? Do the parents have to find something towards the cost? I should be rather glad to know as we might sometimes save unnecessary applications.

Very truly yours

Walter R Carr⁸⁰

The reply has not survived, but the Masons' son was not appointed.

⁷⁶ A298, fol. 73v, 22 November 1878; GB-WOR 496.5 BA9360/C9/Box 4/8.

⁷⁷ A195 Precentor's Reports, 1909–71 (history of the school).

⁷⁸ WJ, 21 April 1883.

⁷⁹ M6.8 Precentor's report 1893.

⁸⁰ G44.36 Letter from Walter Carr.



Fig. 41 The choir school on the left of the photograph with its 1911 extension on the right (photograph by the author, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Woodward kept a register of chorister admissions that included parents' occupations. In 1882, parents, all local, included a bath maker, a carpenter, a gilder in the porcelain works, a publisher, and three sons of Worcester lay clerks. Ten years later (Fig. 42), the fathers included an underwriter from London, a solicitor from Bilston, an artist from Kidderminster, and three sons of clergymen (from Sutton-on-Sea, St Oswalds, Worcester, and Kemerton). Most remarkably, there was a son of a Worcester residentiary canon, almost certainly the first since the Reformation because of the social divide that had always existed between the prebendaries and local people.⁸¹ This change, which would now be seen as unfair, divisive, and discriminatory, had a significant effect on the choir. The precentor reported in 1889 that the 'refined and devotional singing is remarkable', the Worcestershire dialect was no longer an issue, and for now the education seemed to have improved.⁸²

The lay clerk James Smith looked back to the earlier years:

I have been asked if the Chorister Boys of old behaved as well as they do now? No! Not in the same manner. They were an entirely different class of Boys (perhaps more boy-like) the sons of tradesmen in the City, living at home with their parents, not kept under such control when not

81 A149 'Choristers on the Foundation' (1882–1957).

82 M6.23 Precentor's Report 1889.

at services. The times & education were very different. Their general behaviour in Church was good, and many of them did remarkably well in after life, as musicians & in other professions, especially considering the very poor education they received as choir boys.⁸³



Fig. 42 Choristers of the new choir school in c.1892-6, with (left to right) H. H. Woodward (choir school warden), W. Done (organist), and C. Shuttleworth (schoolmaster) (photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

The choir school was to survive until 1943, when once again it was joined to the King's School.

Choir Repertoire

William Done showed a preference for recently composed music, and in the 1860s, anthems such as *The Wilderness* by John Goss, *From the rising of the sun* by Ouseley, and service settings such as Smart in F were included very shortly after being published. Sometimes this new

⁸³ Add MS 137.

music was too challenging, and Done wrote to the Dean and Chapter asking for reimbursement for the lay clerks for an extra weekly rehearsal because of ‘many a serious failure’. Unfortunately, the outcome is unknown.⁸⁴ The Revd H H Woodward, who served as precentor from 1890, shared this preference for contemporary music. Novello’s cheaper octavo editions had become ubiquitous, and he paged through their *Collection of Anthems by Modern Composers*, noting his favourites on the list of contents and adding descriptive comments.⁸⁵ It was impossible to please everyone, however, and the lay clerk James Smith believed that ‘If [Precentor Woodward] had a failing, it was for modern music to the exclusion of many fine old Anthems and Services’. Similarly, the widow of Canon Mandell Creighton, who had joined the chapter in 1885, wrote of her late husband, ‘He did not try to interfere in details of cathedral management, but when possible he urged that the older English Church music should be more often given, and grieved at the preference shown for what he called the modern sentimentalists’.⁸⁶

Hugh Blair

In 1886 William Done was about seventy, and with falling standards of singing by the boys and ‘mistakes and misunderstandings’ on the organ, the Dean and Chapter decided to appoint an assistant.⁸⁷ Hugh Blair was twenty-two and well-known as the son of a local clergyman and a former pupil of Done’s.⁸⁸ He had just graduated from Christ’s College, Cambridge, where he had held an organ scholarship. He was appointed, but William Done was reluctant to release any duties and for two years allowed him to do little.

The Revd Harry Clifford had been appointed minor canon by a new dean, John Gott, in 1886. He quickly accepted responsibility for the voluntary choir and proved to be enthusiastic, thoughtful and a good leader. He presented suggestions for reforming the choir, which were

⁸⁴ M6.1 Letter of William Done, 17 November 1869.

⁸⁵ R4.1 to R4.5 H H Woodward’s Novello ‘Modern Composers’ volumes.

⁸⁶ Add MS 137 Memories of James Smith; Creighton (1913), vol. 1, p. 315.

⁸⁷ M6.19 Precentor’s Report 1886.

⁸⁸ A298 Chapter Acts, 28 June 1886; G44.53 Letter of H Blair accepting post, 30 June 1886. Kevin Allen has written an excellent biography of Hugh Blair (see Allen (2019)).

all accepted.⁸⁹ The chapter clerk scribbled on Harry Clifford's letter, presumably during the chapter meeting, '?Done's £25 for Vol[untary] Choir. Now c[oul]d Blair be appointed to it? Dean [to] see Mr Done'. Hugh Blair did take over the sole training of the voluntary choir and played the organ at the Sunday Evensongs at which they sang (but without any transfer of the £25 fee).⁹⁰ As a result the choir burgeoned. The boys filled in for services when the cathedral choristers were on holiday, and the precentor believed their singing was 'perhaps less refined but still hearty and vigorous'.⁹¹ With Dean Gott's support, occasional orchestral accompaniment of the nave Evensongs was started and became hugely popular with large congregations. The Christmas 1891 service was particularly notable, with the performance of a short *Christmas Cantata* by Hugh Blair and the *Hallelujah Chorus*. Edward Elgar led the orchestra and wrote to his Giggleswick friend, Charles Buck:

Blair (of the Cathedral) and I are pulling together & making things lively here, that is to say in Worcester. We have an orchestral service in the Cathedral on Sunday evening 27th: he has composed a little Cant anthem (new word) for the occasion & we were "at it" last night—very good.⁹²

These services were a big advance for a choir that had previously been largely restricted to singing hymns and chants. Congregations continued to be large, much larger, for example, than at Evensong on Christmas Day when the cathedral choir sang parts of Handel's *Messiah*. The numbers at Trinity 1893 were thought to be 'nearer 4000 than 3000'.⁹³ At a service after Easter in 1894, Elgar's *Sursum Corda* (Op. 11), a ten-minute, ceremonial orchestral work with strings, brass, organ, and timpani, was performed for the first time, taking the place of the opening voluntary.⁹⁴ For 'band services' on Easter Day and Whit Sunday in 1897, two trumpeters led the procession, presumably with fanfares, as it entered the cathedral.⁹⁵

89 Q5.3.2 Suggestions of H Clifford, 17 November 1886.

90 G44.58b Letter of H Blair, 16 January 1888. William Done may of course have paid the money over to Blair. Two years later the fee was halved and the following year it ceased.

91 G44.56a Letter of H H Woodward, 8 January 1888.

92 Moore (1990), p. 37.

93 WC, 27 May 1893.

94 WH, 8 April 1894.

95 A299 Chapter Acts, p. 40.

There is no doubt that these high-profile Evensongs greatly enhanced the self-esteem and reputation of the voluntary choir. Numbers increased to around seventy or eighty, with ten probationers. The commitment was significant, with daily rehearsals for the boys in 1892, reduced to two or three a week over the next few years, and a full rehearsal with the men every fortnight.⁹⁶ In addition there were confirmation classes and scriptural teaching, and Hugh Blair with a local violinist, Arthur Quarterman, provided instrumental instruction. This inspired enough interest that, after a few years, it was possible to form a band that met weekly.⁹⁷ The boys wore college caps with the cathedral crest, but with tufts in place of tassles to distinguish them from the cathedral choristers.⁹⁸ A cathedral guild was formed as a social club for current and former choir boys, with a senior division for the men. A guild room on the ground floor of the Edgar Tower was used as a club room, and boys who had not been in the choir wanted to join, so two divisions were formed, current and former choir boys forming the Guild of St John and others forming the Guild of St James.⁹⁹ There was an annual secular guild soirée, which from 1892 included a play by the boys. For several years Hugh Blair wrote music for them, with orchestral settings of original songs and dances: *The Sleeping Beauty* in 1893; *Prince Jack and the White Cat* in 1894; and *Prince Charming* in 1895. A sports field was rented and a cricket pavilion built, and annual outings continued, usually with adults and boys going to different venues, which were sometimes as distant as Weymouth or Scarborough.

The choir was thriving with a schedule that was busy and demanding. For those willing to commit their time, the rewards were great, and the choir blossomed and flourished for ten 'golden years'.

After increasing pressure from the Dean and Chapter in late 1888, Done must have considered his options over Christmas. Early the next year he asked the Dean and Chapter whether, if he retired, he would be allowed to continue his £150 annual salary as a pension, access to the organ for teaching his two articled pupils, and a continuing tenancy

⁹⁶ Q10.5 Voluntary Choir report, 1892; Q13 Voluntary Choir report, 1896. There were 36 boys, 34 men and 10 probationers in 1896 for example.

⁹⁷ Q14 Voluntary Choir report, 1897.

⁹⁸ Reports by the canon in charge: 1888 (Q6.1.2); 1891 (Q9.1); 1892 (Q10.7); 1893 (Q11); 1896 (Q13).

⁹⁹ Q6.2.2 Voluntary Choir report, 1888; WJ, 16 January 1938.

of the house he lived in.¹⁰⁰ These were heavy demands, but the Dean and Chapter accepted them all and, in fact, went a step further and allowed him to keep the title of organist. This meant that Hugh Blair had to continue to be called 'assistant organist' and to find his own accommodation, despite taking over all the duties of the organist. It is not immediately clear why this added privilege was granted, nor indeed why Done would have thought it right to accept it. The cathedral pension scheme was well established, and eleven years earlier the precentor, the Revd T L Wheeler, had retired with an annuity of sixty pounds, although Done's award was clearly of a rather different order. The arrangement, however, did have some advantages for the Dean and Chapter. Hugh Blair could be offered a lower salary than William Done, which would make continuing Done's full salary more affordable; it would achieve the retirement of the failing, elderly, if much-loved, musician; and it would make it easy to appoint an alternative organist for the senior post in due course if Blair's performance was unsatisfactory for any reason. The new arrangement started on March 25th, and the assistant's salary was set at £100 a year. Hugh Blair seems to have found lodging with a plumber and house painter in Edgar Street.¹⁰¹

William Done died six years later after a fortnight's illness¹⁰² at the age of seventy-nine and after serving as cathedral organist (in name anyway) for fifty-one years. In writing his obituary, the former precentor, Edward Vine Hall, still active on the Worcester music scene, was fairly blunt:

In William Done the Cathedral of Worcester has lost an amiable, a conscientious, and a painstaking organist. No one could say that Dr Done was a brilliant musician; but no one could deny his perseverance, his devotion to duty, his love of his Cathedral and his loyalty to his superiors. His organ playing, in old days, in the opinion of a competent judge, the late Sir Frederick Ouseley, was very admirable, but of late years his increasing deafness and want of nerve power seriously affected his success as a performer on the 'King of Instruments.' As a man Dr Done was highly and worthily respected. He was courteous, punctual, conscientious, high-minded and if he possessed something of the 'artistic temperament' and was sometime somewhat irritable, this soon wore off

100 M1.4.11 Letter of W Done, 3 January 1889.

101 1891 census.

102 WC, 24 August 1895.

and he was friendly and genial as before. To his pupils he was a true and firm friend; and many who are now occupying prominent positions, such as Mr Hugh Blair, Mr Garston, Mr Haynes (of Malvern), Mr Tirbutt (of Bromsgrove), Mr Alfred Caldicott and Mr Hewlett Newth, have deep reason to be thankful to Dr Done for what he did for them when they were under his watchful care. His best work was, no doubt, his teaching: his boys at the Cathedral were simply first-rate. Caldicott, Newth, Blackford, Blandford, Hill and others of more recent date, were all boy singers of whom any organist might be proud; while he also turned out a large number of talented and successful musicians who are doing well in various parts of the world. As a conductor Dr Done was not a success. He was too timid and nervous to control a large body of executants, and on many occasions, at the Festivals, he severely tried to *patience* of M. Sington, the leader of the orchestra. Indeed, Sington often took the bit between his teeth, and 'forced the pace', compelling Dr Done and the whole orchestra to follow *his* energetic lead.¹⁰³

On the day of William Done's funeral, Blair's voluntary choir boys filled in for the choristers who were away on holiday. Afterwards, his coffin was borne down the High Street towards the Astwood Cemetery, with the great cathedral bell tolling and tradesmen's shutters closed out of respect for a well-known and much-loved citizen.

When Blair took over the choir the precentor was pleased with the reverence and refinement of the singing,¹⁰⁴ but a recurring theme was the failing voices of elderly lay clerks. One man had served well and faithfully for many years but had a voice which was 'harsh and discordant'¹⁰⁵ and the precentor implied that he was not alone. *The Churchman*, an American Episcopalian journal, reported on the choir a few months after Hugh Blair resigned.¹⁰⁶ The report observed that in procession the choristers marched 'in proper military style', and complimented them on the strength of their voices, their excellent breathing and dynamics. The men were less impressive: the tenors' voices had not aged well and the altos—there were only two of them—were inaudible. The performance was much improved when four supernumeraries were present on Sundays. This weakness of the men's singing was an ongoing issue, and remained a problem well into the twentieth century.

¹⁰³ WH, 24 August 1895.

¹⁰⁴ M6.23 Precentor's Report, 1889.

¹⁰⁵ M6.20 Precentor's Report, 1887.

¹⁰⁶ *The Churchman* (1898), 15 January, p. 92.

The Robert Hope-Jones Organ

Electricity had arrived in Worcester in 1894 from a hydroelectric power station on the River Teme at Powick, and within two years it was being used for cathedral lighting, probably in the quire.¹⁰⁷ Early lighting was of a temporary and movable nature, and in 1906 gas must still have been playing a part, as two gas standards in the quire were relaquered.¹⁰⁸ Later, in 1913, electricity would be used to light the nave,¹⁰⁹ but meanwhile, against the background of a fault-ridden nave organ and no doubt inspired by the newly-arrived electricity, Dean Forrest led a campaign to replace both organs with a new electric one.¹¹⁰ The organ builder was to be the controversial inventor Robert Hope-Jones.



Fig. 43 The Hope-Jones console of 1896 (M8.41, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

¹⁰⁷ Most payments specify 'electric fittings', although that of 1894–5 just reads 'Santonna 4s 0d' (J F Santonna, electrical engineer, Sidbury).

¹⁰⁸ A299 Chapter Acts, p. 151.

¹⁰⁹ A299, pp. 342, 348.

¹¹⁰ As it happens, Hope-Jones' organ was not to use mains electricity until 1903.

Construction was started in 1896, and in May the great case of Hill's transept organ was moved back some twelve or fourteen feet, as it was only needed to house the solo and pedal departments.¹¹¹ The console had already arrived (Fig. 43), and two months later the organ was more or less completed in time for the opening ceremonies on July 28th.¹¹²

The characteristics of a Hope-Jones organ have become well-known: wide-scaled flue pipes with fewer harmonic tones; diapasons with upper lips cut high and leather-covered to achieve a smoother tone; keen strings with such a diminutive scale that they had to be encased in wood for the bottom octave for support; and powerful reeds and diaphones on unprecedented wind pressures. The Worcester organ was conceived as having nave and chancel sections to accompany nave and quire services, respectively, and a new case was constructed on the south of the quire to match that on the north.¹¹³

Reactions at the time were generally positive. The blind organist and composer William Wolstenholme found the diapasons fine, and the gamba tone beautifully voiced.¹¹⁴ Many commented on the great power of the instrument, and some were doubtful whether the 'fancy' orchestral stops and novel effects were quite appropriate for a church.¹¹⁵ There were problems with the wind supply that were not really resolved until 1903, when two electric motors were installed in the crypt. For these, new heavier cabling was necessary from the guildhall, and to reduce disruption, its laying had to await installation of electric tram lines in the High Street.<?>

Hugh Blair's Resignation

Hugh Blair's one weakness was his alcohol problem. Little was said or written about this at the time, even to him, and we have to rely on a letter written by Precentor Woodward for the events leading to his downfall. H H Woodward writes that Hugh Blair's appointment 'was accompanied with a caution which he fully understood'. Despite this,

¹¹¹ *Musical Standard*, 18 April 1896; *WJ*, 23 May 1896.

¹¹² *WC*, 23 May 1896.

¹¹³ Clark (1993).

¹¹⁴ *Musical Herald* (1914), 800, 391–94.

¹¹⁵ *WC*, 1 August 1896.

on Christmas Day 1895, he was 'not in a fit state to accompany the Evening Service', and this recurred at intervals throughout the next year. Without discussing it with Hugh Blair, the chapter had asked Precentor Woodward, as head of the choir, to report further lapses, but he felt the responsibility was too heavy. He suggested that the chapter should broach the matter with Hugh Blair and at the annual audit should issue the first of three admonitions.¹¹⁶ This was done, and the following June, after a second admonition and believing a dismissal for alcoholism would be disastrous for his reputation, Hugh Blair decided to resign. He wrote to the chapter clerk, saying that he would be moving away from Worcester after his forthcoming marriage and so would have to relinquish the post.¹¹⁷ The resignation was accepted, and a leaving date set for September 29th (Michaelmas).¹¹⁸

Unwisely, Hugh Blair returned early from honeymoon in summer 1897 and played the organ for Sunday services.¹¹⁹ Possibly once again he was not completely sober, because the fallout was rapid and decisive. Woodward reported him to the chapter, and they immediately suspended him from his office and emoluments.¹²⁰ It was a harsh action against a gifted musician who had worked so hard for many years for the cathedral and its music. Blair wrote to the chapter clerk asking him to mediate with the chapter, hoping that,

having now got rid of me they will at least be willing to rescind the suspensory minute and to see that the matter is kept strictly in confidence. I feel sure I am not asking too much of your good nature or of theirs in this. I have enough enemies who would rejoice in my complete ruin.¹²¹

If he received any sympathy or pastoral help from the Dean and Chapter, it is not recorded. The minute was not rescinded, and his salary stopped immediately. This sad lack of regard for him may have had its roots in the Victorian attitude to intemperance. Alcoholism had yet to gain wide acceptance as an illness rather than a vice. It was seen as a moral failing reflecting shame on an individual, and these considerations must have

¹¹⁶ M1.4.8 Letter of H H Woodward, 25 November 1896.

¹¹⁷ M1.4.9 Letter of H Blair, 18 June 1897, M1.4.17 Letter of H Blair, 24 June 1897.

¹¹⁸ A299, p. 33, 12 July 1897.

¹¹⁹ M1.4.3 Letter of H Blair, 25 July 1897.

¹²⁰ A299, p. 34, 23 July 1897.

¹²¹ M1.4.3.

weighed more heavily with the chapter at that moment than the great contribution Blair had made to the work of the cathedral.

Hugh Blair's popularity in Worcester was widespread, although it seems likely that knowledge of his alcohol problem was common. At the commemoration dinner of the voluntary choir in 1899, when his name was mentioned, the applause was most enthusiastic and lasted a full minute. After that, each mention of him was greeted with cheers.¹²²

* * *

By the end of the century, much had improved from the decline of the 1840s. In his later years, William Done believed that Worcester had 'one of the best services in the country' and even attentive listeners would 'scarcely hear a slip' by the choir.¹²³ The voluntary choir was flourishing and had brought in both singers and congregation from the working class, there had been a radical restoration of the fabric, and a choir school had been established. The clergy were now resident for longer each year, although, in 1884, Dean Alwyne Compton still rejected statutes drafted by a cathedral commission that tried to impose continuous residence.¹²⁴ In the eyes of Bishop Perowne, the cathedral was now 'a calm retreat of devout meditation and perpetual worship, a haven and a refuge amid the storm and stress of a weary, restless age'.¹²⁵

122 WC, 2 December 1899.

123 WJ, 2 June 1894.

124 Cathedral Commission (1884), p. 4.

125 Visitation of diocese, 1895, GB-WOR 801.02 BA2607.

10. The Earlier Twentieth Century and Two World Wars (1900–50)

New challenges were to face the cathedral in the twentieth century including two world wars, but initially the most pressing need was the appointment of a new organist. Rather than opting for a musician to serve while the selection was being considered, the Dean and Chapter chose to make a new appointment with some haste. In the next three years, there may have been moments when they regretted this decision.

Hugh Blair's resignation was sent on June 24th 1897, and by the time it was officially accepted by chapter, on July 12th, there had already been at least twelve applications to replace him. Letters relating to a score of applicants survive in the cathedral library, and perhaps because there were so many, the Dean and Chapter decided not to advertise.¹ Of these, perhaps the most obviously promising was Tertius Noble, who had been building his reputation as organist of Ely Cathedral for five years ('He is a treasure worth securing. I don't believe there is a greater musical genius in England & withal of a true devotional spirit', effused Raymond Pelly, vicar of Great Malvern),² but also there were George Beale, organist of Llandaff Cathedral and Herbert Morris, organist of St David's Cathedral. Percy Buck, organist of Wells Cathedral, asked for details but may have only received a reply after the appointment was made.

Of the surviving letters from applicants, that of Ivor Atkins, organist of Ludlow Parish Church, is probably the best written and was accompanied by glowing references from C Lee Williams (Gloucester Cathedral),

¹ There may have been more applicants, but a report in the *South Wales Daily News* (1897), 9 August, suggesting there were '300 applicants including candidates who were organists of minor cathedrals' seems likely to be an exaggeration.

² M3.2.2 Letter of R Pelly, 13 July 1897.

George Sinclair (Hereford Cathedral), A L Peace (Glasgow Cathedral) and others.³ Chapter acts are well known for giving decisions without revealing the reasoning behind them, and whatever the chapter's priorities were, the appointment of Ivor Atkins was made by July 24th, less than a fortnight after their official acceptance of Blair's resignation.

Atkins was aged twenty-seven, and one commentator in the musical press noted that his appointment was one of a growing trend to favour younger musicians for the position of cathedral organist. He quoted other examples of men of thirty or younger, and, while accepting that the younger generation included brilliant organists, he implied concern for their ability to continue the tradition of choral music.⁴ Ivor Atkins had a distinguished career lasting fifty-three years, but the first three may have provoked similar disquiet in Worcester.

Initially, signs of unrest were connected with the Voluntary Choir. Atkins was unhappy with the number and selection of hymns made by the Revd W G Melville, the minor canon responsible for the choir, and refused to play for them; he wanted to remove some senior boys because of their poor vocal quality, and he 'would not do anything more for the choir' otherwise. The minor canon capitulated but gained the displeasure of the chapter in doing so because they felt he was abdicating his responsibility.⁵ The next year the boys made a poor showing when deputising during the cathedral choristers' holiday.⁶ The Revd Melville had left, but a new minor canon in charge of the choir blamed this on inadequate preparation by the organist, and he also considered the Trinity Sunday Voluntary Choir band service 'might have been more successful', again implying criticism.

In April 1899 Atkins was married, and the following July the Choral Society assembled at the Guildhall to present him with an engraved silver salver to mark the occasion. The dean, presiding for the society, made a speech and seemed to believe that some form of apologia was necessary:

Mr Atkins had various duties to fulfil. As to his playing of the Cathedral organ there could be no two opinions; no-one in England could play it

³ M3.1.1 to M3.1.14 Letters of application.

⁴ *Musical News* (1897), 18 December, p. 549.

⁵ Q15.2 Letter of W G Melville, 20 June 1898; A299 Chapter Acts, p. 48, 23 June 1898.

⁶ Q16.5 Report on Voluntary Choir, C T Powell (1899).

better than he did (applause). He had other duties, as to the performance of which there must be a difference of opinion, and a man in his position [...] could not please everybody.⁷

It was perhaps unfortunate that Dean Forrest felt it necessary to mention the issue, but his speech was clearly intended to be encouraging and reassuring, and it met with support from members of the Society.

A few months later Ivor Atkins had the onerous responsibility of conducting the Music Festival. At this date, this involved not only appointing soloists but also individual orchestral players, as well as directing rehearsals in London and conducting throughout the week. Exceptions only arose when works could be passed to their composers to conduct. Reviews were mixed, although probably more were critical, and most recognised the heavy demands that were being made and were sympathetic about the lack of rehearsal time. The chorus was considered zestless and hesitant; tempos were thought erratic—at one point in the *Messiah*, tenors and basses stopped singing and laughed because of the impossibility of singing semiquaver runs at the pace demanded; and one paper suggested ‘a little additional tact would work wonders’ in dealing with band and chorus. The *Pall Mall Gazette* thought the chorus sang ‘wretchedly’ in *Elijah*, and despite some ‘musicianly touches’, suggested Atkins did not have ‘the power to touch his forces with his own personality’, concluding, ‘I do not consider Mr Atkins as in any sense a conductor satisfactorily equipped to bring a big festival like this to a successful issue’.⁸ It was a difficult time, and Atkins must have consoled himself with kinder reports in some papers, hoping for a better experience at the next festival.

Worse was to follow, however. As with Hugh Blair’s problems three years before, it was the precentor, the Revd H H Woodward, who tackled the subject and brought it to a head. In his annual report to the Dean and Chapter in November 1900, he included a section marked ‘Private and Confidential’ in relation to Atkins, which ended, ‘I am obliged therefore to admit that I now agree with those who have so often pronounced him not up to his work’. Listing the issues, he mentioned a lack of the training of any chorister soloists, excessively loud accompaniments with ‘careless blunders’, and an unwillingness to listen to criticism.

7 *Hereford Times* (1899), 1 July.

8 *Pall Mall Gazette* (1899), 10755, 16 September 1899.

The points were put to Ivor Atkins in a letter by the chapter clerk with a suggestion from the chapter that he resigned. He contested them strongly. The fault in the choristers' training lay in the material; many boys had been taken on who were not even good enough for a parish choir, but there were insufficient applicants to reject any. The problem with accompaniments arose from failings in the organ: electrical faults, malfunctioning composition keys (pistons), and noisy swell shutters. The dean himself replied, with rather less sympathy than he had shown at the public meeting the previous year.⁹ He was unhappy with 'constantly recurring mistakes [...] which would not be pardonable in a village church'; 'noisy and strident accompaniments' causing the boys to overstrain their voices and the men to be silent; and a failure to cultivate solo voices. However, he was willing to give Atkins an opportunity for further improvement, having observed some changes for the better.

Ivor Atkins had managed to regain the support of the precentor, and this probably lay behind the dean's change of heart.¹⁰ Precentor H H Woodward was highly respected and influential, and his approval was crucial; while he had his backing, Atkins could consider the dark ages to be over; his three-year initiation was completed. Remarkably, from this time on almost all comments are complimentary, and in the New Year's Honours List of 1921 he was to receive a knighthood for his work in re-establishing the Three Choirs Festival after the war.

Ivor Atkins worked alongside the Revd H H Woodward for almost twelve years. Woodward had been precentor since 1890 and was a competent musician. He had composed a sacred cantata, *The Light of the World*, for his B.Mus. degree at Cambridge, and also a number of anthems,¹¹ including one for Evensong, *The radiant morn hath passed away*, which achieved widespread popularity.¹² At Worcester, he chose the music for services, directed the full choir rehearsals, and conducted on occasions when the cathedral choir was supplemented by the Festival Chorus or the Voluntary Choir. The organist's duties were limited to playing the organ and training the boys. Woodward was widely respected, had natural leadership ability, and was warden of the choir

9 M5.9.5 Letter of R W Forrest, 3 December 1800.

10 M5.9.4 Letter of H. H. Woodward, dated 2 December 1900.

11 Novello's catalogue of 1906 listed eight anthems by Woodward that they published.

12 *Musical Times* (1905), 46, 1 November, p. 724.

school, which he himself had founded. When he died after surgery in 1909 at the age of sixty-two, there was much sadness, and the selfless dedication he had shown towards his work was greatly missed. As an exceptional tribute to his achievements, an extension to the choir school was built in his memory, with his statue in a niche on the front (see Fig. 41). After his death, there was a shift in the roles of precentor and organist. His replacement, the Revd Edward Tupper, asked Atkins to take over full choir practices,¹³ and when he left nine years later, the privilege of choosing the music also officially fell to the organist.¹⁴

Canon James Wilson joined the chapter in 1905, and later, recalling the cathedral ethos, wrote: ‘The general tone was that all that had to be done had been done, and all that we had to do was to keep Cathedral services going’.¹⁵ Dean Robert Forrest was considered evangelical, and the services followed the customary weekly pattern, with an expected routine of excerpts from Handel’s *Messiah* on Ascension Day, Good Friday, and Christmas Day, Spohr’s *Last Judgement* during Advent, and a sacred cantata for Harvest Thanksgiving. While the choir was managed by Precentor H H Woodward, Ivor Atkins worked with the boys, and a visitor wrote in 1905:

The choristers, twenty in number, are vocally trained, and well trained, by the cathedral organist, Mr Ivor Atkins, whose aim is to make musicians of his little men. This is evident at the daily practice—held in the Chapter House from 8.30 to 9.30am—when the good tone, phrasing, and alertness of the boys are exemplified in such strains as Goss’s ‘O pray for the peace of Jerusalem’, a veritable gem in the rich diadem of English church music. Questions are asked on matters of intervals &c., the answers hereto showing that these bright boys are keen upon their work and that the practice hour is one that passes most pleasantly¹⁶

The visitor’s impression of the rehearsal—which, since Hugh Blair had taken over from William Done, was held in the chapter house—may have varied from the boys’, who respected Atkins but feared the pain of having their hair pulled for sub-standard singing.¹⁷

¹³ A195 Precentor’s Reports, p. 5.

¹⁴ A299 Chapter Acts, pp. 442–3, 19 November 1918.

¹⁵ Add MS 165 Canon Wilson autobiography, ix, 1, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Musical Times* (1905), 46, 1 November, p. 709.

¹⁷ Newsholme (1997).

After the flowering of the Voluntary Choir under Hugh Blair, there was something of a downturn in its fortunes in the early years of the century. Band services were discontinued after the less than ideal performance on Trinity Sunday 1899, and an application in 1906 to restart them was refused by the chapter.¹⁸ Instead they suggested an anthem (with organ) could be included on three occasions in the year if the men of the Voluntary Choir were supplemented by members of the choral society,¹⁹ hardly implying much confidence in their abilities. The Cathedral Guild's secular concerts ceased, and a new minor canon responsible for the choir, the Revd T C de la Hey, remarked in 1910 that he was disappointed by the 'remarkable absence of corporate spirit amongst the members of the Guild', which he attributed in part to an unattractive and inadequate Guild room in the Edgar Tower.²⁰

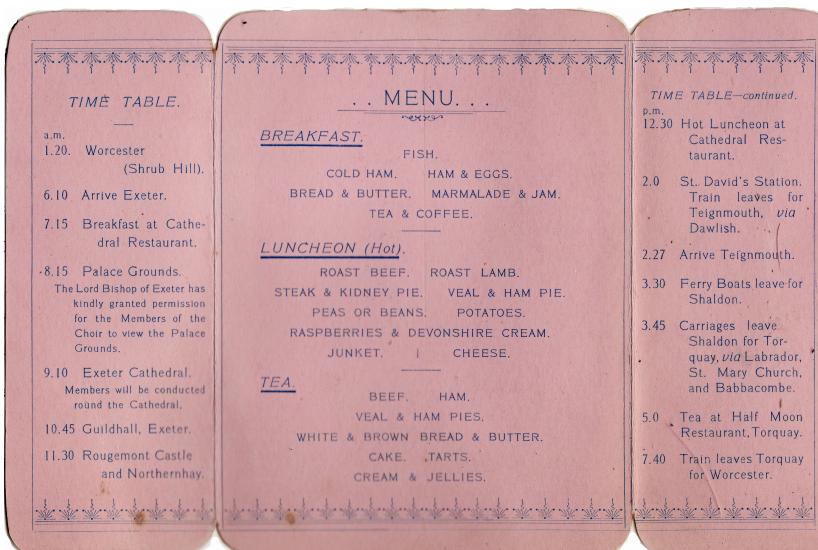


Fig. 44 Adults' voluntary choir excursion to Devon in 1904 (VC138, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

18 Q23.4 Letter of I Atkins and A Philips, minor canon, 26 October 1906.

19 Q23.8 Response of Chapter, 4 December 1906.

20 Q27.1 Letter of T C de la Hey, minor canon, 24 March 1910.

At the same time there was ongoing unrest between the organist and the minor canon in charge, culminating in 1905 in a letter by Atkins to the Dean and Chapter in which he implied that the minor canon—at that time, the Revd C T Powell—had appointed musical ‘undesirables’ as choir boys, who were hampering progress. For the men, he felt that the choir had quantity but not quality and believed that the minor canon testing voices for admission had had the effect of undermining his musical authority.²¹ His letter was forthright and uncompromising, and the chapter capitulated, reversing their ruling of 1899 that the minor canon was to assume the managerial position.²² The change seemed to galvanise Ivor Atkins, and the next year’s report commended for the first time ‘the great care, zeal and skill’ that he had bestowed on the choir and, in 1907 ‘the wonderful care & trouble which Mr Atkins takes with it & especially with the boys’.²³

Members of the voluntary choir were sometimes allowed to assist with singing the *Messiah* selections,²⁴ and one former voluntary choir boy recalled years later the exhilaration of voices soaring in the Hallelujah chorus on one of these occasions, with the organ flitting between the quire and transept (bombard) sections.²⁵

Over the years, there were signs of improvement. In 1906, the Dean and Chapter had allocated six pounds for prizes to be given to voluntary choir boys for musical achievement, scripture knowledge, and attendance.²⁶ A scheme was drawn up with examinations, and prizes were awarded in the spring and winter each year,²⁷ copies of Spohr’s *Last Judgement* and Bach’s *St Matthew’s Passion* being favourites for these (Fig. 45). How many families have inherited these prized volumes, with slightly battered covers but pristine pages, because, ironically, the ‘vollers’ were not included in their performance?

21 Q22.2 Letter of I Atkins, 25 November 1905.

22 A299, p. 57, 2 January 1899.

23 Q23.5 Report of A Philips, minor canon, November 1906; Q24.1 Report of E Tupper, minor canon, November 1907.

24 Memories of H. F. Waldron, in Eric C. M. Baker, *Worcester Cathedral Voluntary Choir, 1874–1974*, p. 14.

25 Memories of A. C. Bishop, personal communication.

26 A299, p. 149.

27 Q24.2 Voluntary Choir Prize Scheme, E Tupper.

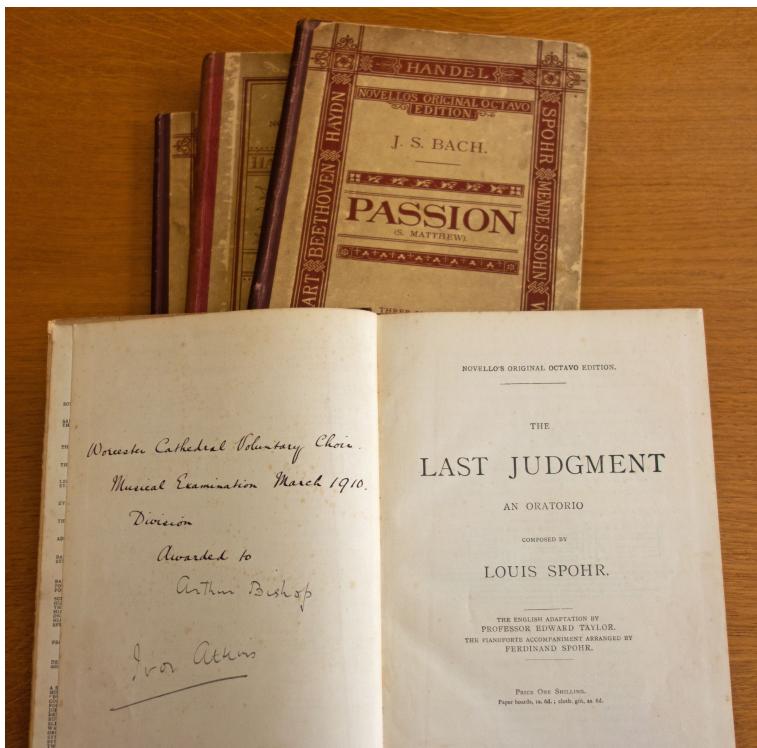


Fig. 45 Novello editions awarded as prizes to boys of the Voluntary Choir (in the author's ownership, CC BY-NC 4.0)

Dean Forrest died in 1908, and his place was taken by William Moore Ede. Moore Ede was fifty-nine. He was considered an evangelical, broad churchman, made it his mission to serve all around him, and in chapter meetings was a model of good temper, patience and justice. He had no interest in ceremonialism or ritualism and was not preoccupied with liturgical form, a characteristic that one of the canons believed was often confused with irreverence.²⁸ Six years after his appointment he had to manage the cathedral's response to a new conflict. The Boer War had caused the loss of life of many Worcestershire men, but this was going to touch the lives of everyone.

28 A165, ix, 3, p. 8. Canon Wilson autobiography.

The First World War

Through the early years of the century, the military expansion and aggressive foreign policy of Germany had been foreboding signs; then in June 1914, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand became the spark that led to the outbreak of world war. The absence of men serving in the forces was to impact most cathedral choirs, but Worcester may have been more fortunate than some. The three basses and three tenors had all sung with the choir since the start of the century, and all were to continue until well after the war. Two of the tenors were over seventy, with even longer service behind them. Of the six, only two basses were involved in war work, and one of these was still able to sing on Sundays, as he worked in Worcester. A replacement was employed, and a volunteer was able to give occasional help. The altos proved rather more of a problem: one served in the army and the other in munitions work, but substitutes were usually found. Fortunately, the choristers were singing well, and in 1918 the precentor was able to say, ‘The standard of the choir depends largely upon the work of the boys & the present excellence will continue so long as their proficiency is maintained’.²⁹ Thursday services were sung by boys alone from March 1915, and the choir gave creditable service throughout the war, helping to boost home morale in the many well-attended memorial and thanksgiving services.

Services sung by choristers without the men were rare prior to the First World War, and the repertoire was limited, but the boys started to sing by themselves at both Morning and Evening Prayers on Thursdays.³⁰ Hymns were sometimes used in place of anthems, and it was possible to use familiar, full-choir settings for both canticles and anthems if the organ filled in the missing parts. It was also an opportunity to introduce plainsong hymns and chants. The lay clerks could not be persuaded to sing Gregorian chant before about 1939; their ‘puritan instincts’ were ‘thoroughly roused at the sound of a Tone’, Atkins later wrote, adding that occasionally there were also canons to whom this music brought ‘infinite distress’. They seem to have been accepted for the boys’ services though, and gained a wider exposure when they were sung, again without the men, on the seven-hundredth anniversary of the dedication

29 A195, Precentor’s Report, 1918 p. 26.

30 A195, pp. 13–14.

of the cathedral of 1218. This was an important commemoration; the dedication had followed the canonisation of Wulfstan and the burial of King John in the cathedral, and it had taken place in the presence of the ten-year-old King Henry III. Many were deeply affected by the music, and a reviewer in the *Church Times* wrote of 'the heartening and peace which, in these tumultuous times, this perfect day brought'.³¹ The precentor, E H Tupper, was also moved and believed that the service represented the 'high water mark of excellence' attained during his time.³²

The four years of war were disturbing, uncertain ones, described by Canon Wilson as a time of 'prolonged agony and anxiety'. His son was killed in 1915, and he recalled later, 'The death of our dear Hugh [...] was but an incident in these years of continued strain and horror'. A second son died in France the following year.³³ The cathedral was able to respond to public feeling at this sombre time and provided much-needed spiritual and emotional support in a series of inventive services and recitals. One of the earliest of them, on August 4th 1915, marked the anniversary of the start of the conflict. The cathedral was filled completely with many standing, and yet more queuing in a rainstorm with no room for them inside. A newspaper declared there was never 'a service more impressive, or more expressive of so many and profound emotions'. The *Russian Contakion for the Departed*, a funeral anthem set to the Kieff melody, was sung 'exquisitely' by an unaccompanied quartet of voices and became a regular feature of these services.³⁴

Concerts gave the opportunity to raise funds for the Red Cross, the Belgian refugees, and other local war charities, and Atkins rose to the challenge. A *Recital of Christmas Music* in College Hall in 1917 was conceived by the dean's wife, Mrs Moore Ede, with attendance by invitation only. Patrons were presented with an expensively printed programme on embossed paper. Much of the music was unfamiliar and was considered old and quaint. It included one of the earliest cathedral performances of the now well-known setting of Peter Cornelius's

31 *Church Times* (1918), 14 June.

32 A195, p. 26.

33 Add MS 165, x, 1, pp. 19–20.

34 WJ, 7 August 1915; WC, 7 August 1915; WDT, 4, 5, 6, August 1915.

Three kings, which was to become an annual tradition. Cornelius had published the song *Die Könige* as one of his *Weihnachtslieder Ein Cyklus fur eine singstimme mit pianofortebegleitung* in 1870. Both text and music were by him, but the piano accompaniment was the hymn *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* by Philip Nicolai. An edition for solo and chorus had been published by Schirmer in the USA in 1879, but Atkins made his own. At Worcester, it seems to have been sung most years in carol services from 1919, with three choristers taking the solo part, and in 1930 the arrangement was published by Oxford University Press with a new translation by H. N. Bate.

Recital of Christmas Music, 1917	
PART 1	PART 2
Corelli: <i>Christmas Concerto for viols</i>	
Palestrina: <i>Hodie Christus natus est</i>	Farnaby: <i>Old English Suite</i>
Pearsall: <i>In dulci jubilo</i>	Byrd: <i>An earthly tree</i>
Handel: <i>Pastoral symphony</i> (<i>The Messiah</i>)	Elgar: <i>A Christmas Greeting</i>
Carol: <i>A Babe is born in Bethlehem</i>	Atkins: <i>The Virgin's Lullaby</i>
Carol: <i>The First Nowell</i>	Stanford: <i>A Carol of Bells</i>
Bach: <i>Slumber Song</i> (<i>Christmas Oratorio</i>)	Carol: <i>God rest you merry</i>
Carol: <i>Qui creavit coelum</i>	Carol: <i>O drive your herds to pasture</i>
Cornelius: <i>The Three Kings</i>	Bach: <i>Come and thank him</i> (<i>Christmas Oratorio</i>)

Table 4 The programme for the 1917 recital

Earlier that year, a *Recital of Solemn Music* had been given in the cathedral and was open to all. The attendance was so good that some, once again, were unable to gain admission. Elgar's *For the Fallen* was included, with an organ reduction of the orchestral part and conducted by the composer. In addition were the *Contakion*; Bach's *Jesus, priceless Treasure*, unaccompanied; and Carrie Tubb singing Handel's *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. It was a moving commemoration, partly because of

the time, partly because of the wide appeal of Elgar's music, but also because of Atkins' ability to put together an attractive programme and to present it successfully under wartime conditions.³⁵

A tradition of organ recitals including vocal or choral music had grown in the years before the war,³⁶ but during the war, when opportunities for listening to music were limited, they gained significance and popularity. The cathedral choir would take part, arias for soloists were included along with a congregational hymn, and the recital would end with a blessing and the national anthem. One of these recitals, on November 14th 1918, arranged at very short notice three days after the Germans had signed the armistice, was particularly well attended. All the seats were taken, hundreds stood, and hymns were interspersed with organ pieces and Elgar's Imperial March for brass and organ. Unanimity in the hymn singing was achieved by using cornets in the nave, as experience had shown that the organ alone would not achieve this with such big congregations. The programme ended with a *Solemn Te Deum* for chorus, strings, brass, drums and organ by Stanford. It was found 'beautiful and heart-stirring' and 'a happy augury for the musical reconstruction with [in] the city in the future'.³⁷

Despite the conflict, or often because of it, all of these services and concerts had been remarkably successful. Attendance had been high, the choir had coped well despite the shortage of altos, and Ivor Atkins' choice of repertoire had been discerning and apt. His reputation was running high with the chapter by the end of the war, and at his request, they assigned a vacant minor canon's stall to him 'in recognition of the conspicuous ability, conscientious diligence and loyal devotion with which he has superintended the musical rendering of the various services'.³⁸ They also offered him a gift of fifty pounds to mark twenty-one years of service, mentioning 'the high standard of the music' and the 'reputation the services have [...] attained amongst Cathedrals'.³⁹

35 WJ, 17 March 1917; Wulstan Atkins in Newsholme (1997).

36 A scrapbook of organ recital programmes kept by Ivor Atkins (C1.14) starts with 1909.

37 WH, 16 November 1918; A405iv Notabilia 1917–19.

38 A299, pp. 423–24, 5 June 1918.

39 A299, p. 477, 20 November 1918.

Developments between the Wars

Although many were still coming to terms with the loss of loved ones, the trauma of war, and the challenges of returning to normal life, the return of peace did bring new opportunities. One of the earliest of these was the carol service. The well-known Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols had been sung at Truro Cathedral since 1880, but the singing of carols in the cathedral at Worcester took much longer to be accepted. A tentative start was made at the end of the nineteenth century by including a single one at the end of Christmas Day Evensong. From 1909 the carols used for this service were often those collected and harmonised by a former colleague of Ivor Atkins, the Revd W D V Duncombe of Hereford Cathedral (Fig. 46).

15th Century Carol Melody

Harmony and English Words by
W D V DUNCOMBE

Moderato

A Babe is born of mai-den pure From Sa - tan to de - li - ver us; This

cresc.

Ve - ni Cre - a - tor Spi - ri - tus."

boon thus pray we to in - sure: Ve - ni Cre - a-tor Spi - ri - tus."

Ve - ni Cre - a - tor Spi - ri - tus."

Fig. 46 A carol harmonised by W D V Duncombe and often used at Worcester (from W D V Duncombe, *A Collection of Old English Carols*, London, 1893, public domain)

It was not until 1919 that the chapter first agreed to a ‘service of carols and lections from Holy Scripture’ instead of Evensong on Christmas Day. It was clearly based on the Truro service, perhaps taken via King’s College, Cambridge, where it had first been held in the previous year. The chapter may have hoped it would spread some cheer in a war-weary

city, but if so, they gave it very little publicity, and it seems to have passed by almost unnoticed. One newspaper article published two days after Christmas even discussed the singing of carols at the cathedral with no mention of this service at all.⁴⁰ Over the next couple of years the carol service attracted more attention, and there were full accounts of it in the press.⁴¹ There were six lessons rather than nine, but these followed the Truro tradition of being read by clergy and lay readers, starting with a chorister and rising in seniority, and the bidding prayer was the one written by Dean Eric Milner-White for King's College in 1918. The service continued annually and seems to have moved even closer to the Cambridge model by the 1940s.

With the return of peace, Atkins was able to raise the issue of deteriorating organ action with the chapter in November 1919. Probably because of the likely expense at a time of financial stringency, it was nearly two years before Harrison and Harrison of Durham were asked to inspect it.⁴² By then there had been a further decline, and a grand piano had to be used in place of the organ for three years from 1922.⁴³ Harrisons did proceed to rebuild it, renewing the action but making only modest changes tonally: a new large open diapason, added upperwork on the great organ, but only minor alterations elsewhere. Much of the Hope-Jones pipework was to remain too powerful for quire services because it had been designed to accompany nave singing. The organ was completed in time for Easter 1925. Public interest was immense, with a vast audience for the opening organ recital.⁴⁴

The organ found an early use in a series of organ recitals for children. One newspaper ran the startling headline, 'Three Thousand Children at Organ Recital'; it sounded bizarre, but the project represented an early attempt by the cathedral at outreach education. Similar attempts to broaden the school curriculum had been tried elsewhere. The first of these recitals was given in July 1925 in the presence of Edward Elgar. The children had been convened by the Local Education Authority, and they completely filled the nave and aisles back to the west end, the quire,

40 WH, 27 December 1919.

41 N8.1.8 Order of Carol Service c.1925; WJ, 1 January 1921.

42 A300 Chapter Acts, p. 42 (1919), p. 101 (1921); A1.7.23 Harrison and Harrison report, 2 December 1921.

43 A195 Precentor's Reports, p. 39.

44 WJ, 18 April 1925; A1.7.27.

and the Lady Chapel. A programme with simple explanatory notes on the music had been made available to the schools before the recital; hymns were included for the children to sing with support from the cathedral choristers, and arias were sung by Steuart Wilson. Both the dean and Atkins addressed the children from the pulpit. Newspaper reports were favourable and congratulatory,⁴⁵ but we may wonder now if the number of children was overambitious. It is doubtful whether much would have been heard in the remoter parts of the nave and Lady Chapel; the spoken introductions in particular would have been almost inaudible at a time before amplifiers and sound systems.

Another persistent problem was the issue of choristers' education. The chapter had hoped that the formation of the Choir School would solve their educational needs, as with a dedicated timetable and teacher, they no longer missed essential lessons because of cathedral commitments. Not all parents were happy though,⁴⁶ and when a new precentor, the Revd George Barrington Baker, arrived in 1918, having had experience teaching in choir schools, he was also concerned.⁴⁷ One teacher was being expected to teach twenty-six boys aged between nine and fifteen, from elementary level up to their Common Entrance Examinations, in a very limited time: 11.30am to 12.55pm each weekday, and 2 to 4pm on four afternoons a week. It seemed an impossible demand. Fortunately, improvements were to come: in December 1919 the master, Charles Shuttleworth, retired, and his place was taken by the equivalent of two full-time teachers. The following year, more time was found for schooling by stopping sung services altogether on Wednesdays and by allocating Matins on Mondays and Saturdays to the men alone.⁴⁸ A second classroom was found, and then in 1927 a third one as well. George Barrington Baker commented, 'The standard of education has been undoubtedly a low one; it will take some time to bring it up to the standard of a first-rate preparatory school'.

The most significant step came in 1943, when the Choir School merged with the King's School. Some conditions were agreed, including a maximum absence from school of four hours a week; no more than

45 WJ, 4 July 1925; WH, 4 July 1925.

46 G44.55b Complaint of Mr Druce, 1887.

47 See A195 Precentor's Reports, November 1919 onwards.

48 A300, 26 March 1920.

three special services a term; and singing-boys to leave the choir by the end of the term in which they turned fifteen.⁴⁹ No doubt the teaching was more efficient with this new arrangement, but boys were openly pressured by teachers to leave the choir early in the belief that their academic progress was being hampered by it.⁵⁰ There was to be no resolution of the problem until sung weekday Matins were abolished—a step tentatively mooted by a precentor in 1950 but only reduced a day at a time until they finally ceased in 1979.

One of the very earliest broadcast Evensongs was from Worcester on October 4th 1925, a full year before the long-running ‘Choral Evensong’ radio series started. The BBC had been formed only three years before, and the first outside broadcast had been made in 1923 from Covent Garden. The music from Worcester included Walmisley’s canticle settings, and as an anthem, Parry’s *There is an old belief*.⁵¹ Broadcasting at the time was on a regional basis, and although the Birmingham station initiated it, the signal was relayed to Nottingham, Sheffield and Belfast by transponder sites and broadcast by these stations also, achieving reasonably good coverage. There seem to have been reservations about the outcome, with the *Worcester Journal* saying ‘reports from distant places vary a good deal (influenced perhaps by the religious leaning of listeners), as to the success of the experiment compared with similar experiments at other Cathedrals’.⁵² It was never repeated, and this was to be the only broadcast service during Atkins’ long career. He may have found the scrutiny of the microphone too intense; as Walford Davies was later to say, it could ‘overhear’ every mistake, and other cathedrals were to have similar experiences.⁵³

As another example of the advancing technology, in March 1928 the chapter authorised Dean Moore Ede to experiment with loud speakers in the cathedral.⁵⁴ A few months later, four speakers were installed at

⁴⁹ A303i Chapter Acts, 22 February 1943. The wording was altered in 1957 to say that choristers would normally leave by the age of fourteen, but this could be extended by up to a year by the Master of Choristers. M14.4.1 Letter from headmaster to David Willcocks.

⁵⁰ Memories of James Clayton (chorister 1941–7) in Newsholme (1997)

⁵¹ *Illustrated London News* (1925), 3 October; WJ, 3 October 1925.

⁵² WJ, 10 October 1925, ‘Crowquill’s Jottings’; music list in WH, 3 October 1925.

⁵³ Day (2018), pp. 152–3.

⁵⁴ A300, p. 244.

sites under the tower, in the north aisle and at the lower end of the nave, with microphones at the quire and nave lecterns and in the pulpit. An amplifier was sited in the south transept.⁵⁵ There was still room for much improvement, but with this system, several hundred more people in a large congregation were able to hear the service.

In the same year, a revised text of the *Book of Common Prayer* had been placed before Parliament and rejected by the House of Commons. It was seen by some as an Anglo-Catholic revision, and Dean Moore Ede's first response was that the use of any part of it should be avoided.⁵⁶ It was said that he was willing to see changes introduced, but essentially the daily liturgy at Worcester Cathedral continued to follow the 1662 prayer book.⁵⁷ Moore Ede retired in 1934, and the deanery was taken over by Arthur Davies (1934–49), a man who was particularly drawn to missionary work, having served as a missionary himself in India for over twenty years. In managing the cathedral, he did much to enhance the dignity and devotional character of the liturgy, and some inventive services and performances were created.⁵⁸



Fig. 47 A *tableau vivant* in 'The Christmas Mystery' of 1934 (Add MS 250b, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

⁵⁵ A300, p. 258; WH, 8 September 1928.

⁵⁶ WH, 23 June 1928.

⁵⁷ Neville (1908), p. 13.

⁵⁸ *The Times* (1966), 17 September.

One of these, 'The Christmas Mystery', came shortly before Dean Davies's appointment. It employed the voluntary choir and was led by the minor canon in charge of it, the Revd E. C. Butterworth. For many of the singers, it helped to relieve what had come to be seen as a dull, familiar routine at nave Evensongs: hymns, along with psalms and canticles sung to overworked chants. Interspersed between the Gospel for Christmas Day and four hymns, Canon Butterworth narrated the story of Christ's nativity from the pulpit while four *tableaux vivants* were staged.⁵⁹ A black sheet covered the quire screen, behind which the choir sang, and the *tableaux* took place on a platform under the tower, with a large cast including boy scouts, girl guides, and ladies from the Worcester Festival Choral Society (Fig. 47). The performance was welcomed by the newspapers, one commenting that it was aided by 'such up-to-date accessories as floodlighting and spot-lights', and it was repeated for four nights running and then held again in 1935.

Similarly innovative, and also employing the voluntary choir, was Dean Davies's Epiphany service for children in January 1938, inspired by a kindred one at Chichester. Remarkably, two thousand eight hundred primary school children had been invited, and their teachers had coached them in the hymns and carols. Singing was to be led by the voluntary choir. The service started with three wise men entering in procession from the Miserrimus door and moving on to the Lady Chapel, where a *tableau* was formed before the altar. The children bore lighted candles up to the Lady Chapel to see the *tableau* and to make an offering to be given to the Bonaker (children's) Ward at the Royal Infirmary.⁶⁰ In later years, the arrival of the wise men was heralded by a bugle call, and their entry surrounded with clouds of incense. The service was immensely popular and continued for many years. By the 1970s it was something of a period piece, but the chapter's attempts to change the format were resisted by the schools, or rather, the canons suspected, by a 'company of largely retired school teachers'.⁶¹ Eventually it finished around 1990.

59 WCH98 Programme for The Christmas Mystery; WJ, 20 January 1934.

60 WJ, 1 January 1938.

61 A406a 'Worcester Cathedral Chronicle', 11 January 1979.

The Second World War

Increasingly through the 1930s, the spectre of another world war had cast a shadow over daily life, and some months before the declaration of war on September 1st 1939, precautionary plans had been discussed at Worcester. In June an air raid practice drill had been held for residents of College Green, timber had been purchased before it became difficult to source, and provisions for an ‘excess of population’ (meaning evacuees) had been set up.⁶² After the declaration of war there were more precautions. The undercroft of College Hall was designated an air-raid shelter, stained glass removed from some cathedral windows, and Sunday evening nave Evensong suspended because of blackout rules.

It was to be a difficult time for maintaining lay clerk numbers; two lay clerks were called up and never returned, and another two became part-time because of war commitments. Of the rest, some had failing voices, and often on weekdays there was only one capable singer available for each of the men’s parts. The situation with the boys was rather better, although it could easily have been much worse. A merger between the Choir School and the King’s School had been considered in 1936, and it was fortunate that a decision had been deferred. The King’s School had to be transferred to two hotels in Criccieth, North Wales, because the Air Ministry had requisitioned its premises. Fortunately, as the Choir School had its own building, it was not affected, and in the event, the Ministry never moved in, and the expulsion only lasted for two terms.

Performances of Bach’s passion music in Holy Week had to be stopped, but weekday Matins and Evensong were maintained.⁶³ There were special services for the Worcestershire Yeomanry, to commemorate the sacrifice of members of the RAF in the Battle of Britain, for the Worcestershire branch of the Royal College of Nursing, and for various other bodies.⁶⁴ Throughout the war, King George V prescribed National Days of Prayer. Some were at the darkest times, such as on May 26th 1940, at the start of the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Forces from Dunkirk, after troops had been surrounded and cut off by the Germans.⁶⁵

⁶² A302 Chapter Minutes, p. 198.

⁶³ Notes by Ivor Atkins in B4.32 Score of St Matthew Passion, ed W S Bennett.

⁶⁴ A405xi ‘Notabilia Ecclesiae Cathedralis Wigorniensis’, pp. 40–3.

⁶⁵ WJ, 1 June 1940.

The attendance at these sombre services, particularly in the earlier part of the war, was very great, and they were marked more by special prayers than by special music. As the war continued, the attendance may have fallen and, at the service of September 3rd 1942, the dean spoke of 'those who questioned the value of these days of prayer'.⁶⁶ Two years later, though, many were heartened when Atkins was able to mark the liberation of Paris by playing the Marseillaise as they left the cathedral.⁶⁷

Despite the difficulties of continuing the choir through the war, the chapter felt the musical standard of cathedral services had been maintained and had reached a high level. They wrote to Atkins saying so, and he was clearly gratified, giving credit to 'the faithful service of those members of the choir whom the war has spared to us'.⁶⁸



Fig. 48 The sight of choristers processing in a crocodile from choir school to chapter house must have been a familiar one at the time of this photograph in 1940. Mortar boards had been introduced in 1887, and until the early 1940s Eton suits were worn on Sundays, with grey flannel suits at other times⁶⁹ (Add MS 250b, photograph by Dr David Morrison, Cathedral Librarian, by permission of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral, all rights reserved)

66 WJ, 5 September 1942.

67 WJ, 9 September 1944.

68 A1.5.29f Letter of I Atkins, 26 September 1944.

69 Guild reunion report for 1931, A405ix Notabilia 1931–5.

The Late 1940s

Lay clerks and minor canons with war duties returned to their former jobs in the months following the war, no doubt pleased to do so as unemployment and poverty were common. Difficulties caused by having only two altos particularly irked Ivor Atkins, and he drew the attention of the chapter to this in 1942, expressing his ‘amazement’ that they were unwilling to fund a supernumerary singer. He also wrote, with great bitterness, about the discrepancy between his own salary and that of the canons, which he said was twice as much.⁷⁰ By this time, however, Atkins had gained distinction in other ways. His editing of music was extensive and was to become widely influential, and he was also becoming noted as a perceptive medieval historian with good judgement and had published several scholarly articles.

For the choir, there were some new developments. The wearing of red cassocks and surplices continued, as in the previous century, but there was some interest in the boys wearing ruffs. In 1936 the chapter had considered these unnecessary; Eton collars worn outside cassocks on Sundays were adequate.⁷¹ Ten years later they accepted them, but it took the arrival of a new precentor, Desmond Pocock, who had views on the subject, for ruffs to be introduced in 1950.⁷² He also hoped to be able to make the surplices of ‘ampler and fuller dimensions’, which he believed to be more in line with the best English cathedral tradition.

A second change had much wider significance. Gregorio Allegri’s setting of Psalm 51 in Ivor Atkins’ edition (and the more recent editions based on it) has become to many an archetype of sacred, unaccompanied choral music. Written for the seventeenth-century *tenebrae* services in the Sistine Chapel, it was sung in darkness at the close of the liturgy. The music was first sung at Worcester in 1889 following its publication in English by Novello,⁷³ and from at least the start of the century it came to be sung routinely at the end of Friday Lenten Evensongs until 1937.⁷⁴ Its

70 A1.5.29a Report of I Atkins, 1940.

71 A301 Chapter Minutes, p. 319.

72 A303ii Chapter Minutes, p. 8 (1946); A195 Precentor’s Reports, p. 97 (1950).

73 Allegri (1889).

74 From 1905 the edition used was probably that of George Martin, issued as a supplement to the *Musical Times* (1905), 46.746, 1 April, 1–16. From 1900–5 it is mentioned in Special Services booklets, then from 1906 it appears in music lists.

use then stopped again until 1950, the year of Atkins' retirement, when it was re-introduced with the long-neglected abbellimenti, which Atkins published in a new edition the following year.

The abbellimenti, or cadential embellishments, are now regarded as what raises the music above the ordinary, and John Langdon has shown that Atkins' edition, which includes these, is in fact by the English musicologist William Rockstro, who is credited on the score but only in a footnote.⁷⁵ Rockstro never published a performing score himself, perhaps because his own performances were met with a rather lukewarm reception, but he gave in full the part for the solo verses with abbellimenti in his entry under 'Miserere' in Grove's *Dictionary* of 1880.⁷⁶ Atkins' contribution was to recognise music that would have great appeal, and his astuteness in this has had wide influence.

* * *

Two world wars had made this half-century an extraordinary and challenging one. In the Great War, services had given religious and emotional support during years when lives could be overshadowed by a much-feared telegram from the War Ministry. At a time before wireless broadcasts and recordings, the opportunities to listen to music were limited, and concerts had been crowded and welcomed with enthusiasm. The threats for the city in the Second World War were more immediate. Precautions had to be taken: an air raid shelter set up in the College Hall undercroft; manuscripts and rare books moved, some to the crypt and others to deep mines at Bradford on Avon; King John's effigy lowered into the crypt; misericords and some stained glass taken down; and protective structures erected around King John's tomb and Prince Arthur's chantry.⁷⁷ As it happened, the cathedral survived unscathed, and very few bombs fell on the city.

Evidence is lacking between 1890 and 1900.

75 Langdon (1996), p. 2.

76 *Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review* (1885), 1 August, p. 546; *The Academy* (1885), 689, 18 July, 49.

77 A302 Chapter Minutes, pp. 197–8, 263 (air raid shelter, 1939); Add MS 217 List of MSS placed in British Museum depot at Bradford-on-Avon (manuscripts, 1942); A405 xi 'Notabilia Ecclesiae Cathedralis Wigorniensis', p. 28 (King John effigy, 1941); A302, p. 211 (Stained glass, 1939).

The half-century had seen technological advances. Lighting had been much improved by the use of electricity to replace the dim gas light, and the introduction of amplifiers and loud speakers had helped the audibility of services. Before this, the Days of Prayer must have been largely unheard in the further reaches of the building. In addition, innovation and enterprise had been shown in experiments with new services, and there had been inventive interpretations of gospel stories. No doubt some were more successful than others, but at least they had challenged the Church's reputation for staidness and sober, dull ritual. More benefit remained to be taken from opportunities for broadcasting and recording, but these were to await exploration by future generations.

Postscript

This account finishes around 1950, and the reasons for this have been mentioned in the Preface. It would be a pity to ignore the great advances that were still to come, though, and this postscript attempts to give a brief outline of them.

Worcester Cathedral was in many ways quite traditional at mid-century. Dean Milburn (1957–68) still wore gaiters, and chapter meetings were attended by canons in full academic dress.¹ As elsewhere, the liturgy continued to follow the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* after the rejection of the revised text of 1927–8 by Parliament. From September 1950, the music was led by David Willcocks, who took the choir into a world of radio broadcasts. Five months after his installation, Evensong was broadcast for the first time since 1925, and it was thought to have been ‘very well rendered’.² Some changes were made to improve musical standards: choir practices for choristers replaced Matins on Tuesdays and Thursdays for some months, and the number of full-time lay clerks was reduced from eight to six to allow the appointment of up to six part-time singers. It was said that the Worcester choristers became as outstandingly good as those Willcocks was later to train at King’s College, Cambridge.³ David Willcocks himself, perhaps aiming to encourage competition, was prone to tell the boys that the Worcester choir at its best could match the Cambridge one at its worst.⁴ Chosen repertoire often incorporated Tudor and Stuart music, and there was even an on-air programme of anthems by Tomkins and his contemporaries with string ensemble. On the other hand, Willcocks was not unhappy to include music by his assistant, Edgar Day, and in 1953 gave the first broadcast of

1 Harry Bramma, in Newsholme (1997), p. 42.

2 A406a ‘Worcester Cathedral Chronicle’, 13 February 1951.

3 Day (2018), p. 154 and footnote 112.

4 Newsholme (1997), p. 32. Martin Rowling memories.

Herbert Howells' Worcester canticles. After Willcocks, Douglas Guest continued the tradition of broadcasts, and during his time Christmas Midnight Mass was sung, probably for the first time since the reign of Mary Tudor, when the Sarum *Missa in Gallicantu* would have been heard in the early hours of Christmas.⁵

With the arrival of a revised liturgy in the 1960s, there were cautious trials of the Series 2 Alternative Services, which altered the structure of the liturgy but maintained traditional language. The new order was used only at Sung Eucharist when it took the place of nave Evensong once a quarter, and Dean Eric Kemp, on his arrival in 1969, felt the liturgical revision 'had made no impression on Worcester Cathedral' and acted to change this.⁶ The Series 2 liturgy came to be used more widely, and ten years later the Series 3 rite using contemporary language was started for Sung Eucharist on Sunday mornings. During the same decade, with Christopher Robinson and Harry Bramma, the choir released its first LPs, including a landmark recording of sacred music by Edward Elgar. It is easy now to forget how unknown this repertoire was; indeed the precentor, Colin Beswick, considered it obscure enough to form the basis of a prank, or what Elgar would have called a 'jape'. Choosing Elgar's miniature, *Ave verum corpus*, written for the choir of St George's Church, Worcester in the 1880s, he submitted it under the name of a fictitious pupil to a composition competition at the King's School. The hoax was spotted quickly, but suspicion had been raised by the absence of the boy's name from the school roll and not because the music had been recognised.⁷ Since then, and mostly stemming from this recording, Elgar's church music has become much more widely familiar.

The Gurney stoves had provided rather patchy warming, always accompanied by a familiar smell of coke fumes, but it took until 1970 for them to be replaced by a central heating system. The congregation welcomed the improvement in temperatures that resulted. New services around this time included a Family Eucharist at 9.30am on Sundays, started after Christmas 1969 by Dean Kemp for his own children but soon becoming popular with other families and, from 1973, an annual Pet Blessing Service, which was held on the Guesten Hall lawn rather

5 'Mass at Cockcrow'. The *Missa in Aurora* followed at dawn.

6 Kemp (2006), p. 139.

7 Christopher Robinson, in Newsholme (1997), p. 41.

than in the cathedral.⁸ The choristers' education continued to be impacted by weekday sung Matins, and this service was dropped a day at a time, until by 1964 it only persisted on Fridays. On this day the canticles were read, but a Litany sung kneeling was 'the worst chore of a chorister's life', according to a chorister of the time,⁹ and it was to continue for another fourteen years before all sung Matins ceased.

There were tentative experiments with the Taizé style of worship and occasionally with charismatic Eucharists in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, but for Sunday morning services the new Alternative Service Book (1980) liturgy was used.¹⁰ Donald Hunt arrived in 1975 and became known for imaginative concerts, such as one in 1988 of Firework and Coronation music, followed by fireworks on the green and supper in the chapter house. One of the canons remarked of this, 'All the brain child of Donald Hunt, without whom life at Worcester Cathedral would be a great deal more drab than it is'. In the same year, Dr Hunt founded the Elgar Choral Festival, an annual competition involving about sixty choirs and soloists, and his tenure was also marked by a series of overseas tours. Choir tours had been undertaken first in the early 1970s, initially to the continent, and later to South Africa and the USA as well, spreading the name and reputation of the choir widely. Adrian Lucas followed Dr Hunt and oversaw the installation of an organ by Kenneth Tickell in 2008. The pipework was almost completely new but included a Viole d'Orchestre from the Hope-Jones organ and a few pipes in the pedal Choral Bass which were reputed to have been in Thomas Harris's instrument of 1666–9. It also has the novelty of being partly installed in the roof spaces behind the triforium on north and south, speaking (remarkably well) through openings made in the quire walls. Temperature management in the roof spaces has been a problem and air control systems have been necessary, the latest system installed in 2017. During Adrian Lucas's time the first cathedral girls' choir was formed, anticipating this move in a number of other cathedrals.

More recently the cathedral outreach programme has expanded from its experimental start with organ recitals for thousands of children in the 1920s to a wide-ranging scheme of education for schools, delivered

8 Kemp (2006), p. 141.

9 Adrian Partington in Newsholme (1997), p. 44.

10 A406a.

in the cathedral, in the newly converted undercroft, and also online. Opportunities for singing in cathedral choirs have grown considerably, and numbers attending services and visiting as tourists are recovering after faltering during the Covid-19 pandemic. All of this has been despite a national fall in numbers of people calling themselves Christians to 46% in the 2021 UK census, from 59% only ten years before. This trend, with a changing population demographic and the pandemic, had led to general concern about the continued financial viability of cathedrals. Happily, although there is no room for complacency, the signs of recovery suggest that there is now more reason to be optimistic.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations for manuscript libraries and archives in this book follow the library sigla assigned by RISM (Répertoire International des Sources Musicales)

F-Pn	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
GB-Ccc	Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge
GB-DRc	Durham Cathedral Library
GB-Lbl	British Library
GB-Lcm	Royal College of Music
GB-Lco	Royal College of Organists
GB-Lgc	Guildhall Library, London
GB-Ll	Lincoln Cathedral Library
GB-Llp	Lambeth Palace Library
GB-Lna	National Archives
GB-GL	Gloucester Cathedral Library
GB-Ob	Bodleian Library, London
GB-Och	Christ Church Library, Oxford
GB-Ojc	St John's College Library, Oxford
GB-Omc	Magdalen College Library, Oxford
GB-SHR	Shropshire Record Office, Shrewsbury
GB-WRec	Eton College Library, Windsor
GB-WO	Worcester Cathedral Library
GB-WOr	Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

Manuscript references given without a library sigla always refer to Worcester Cathedral Library. Those preceded by a C (e.g., C260) refer to monastic account rolls, and where it is not specified these account rolls belong to the *magister capelle beate Marie*.

BCP	Book of Common Prayer
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury
WJ	Berrow's <i>Worcester Journal</i> , also called <i>The Worcester Post-Man</i> , and <i>Worcester Weekly Journal</i> at various times.
WC	<i>Worcestershire Chronicle</i>
WH	<i>Worcester Herald</i>
WDT	<i>Worcester Daily Times</i>

Years before 1752 are usually altered to modern format assuming a January 1st start to the year rather than a March 25th start (The Annunciation), which was used at the time. Occasionally, where there could be confusion both are given (e.g., 1648/9 signifying year in original source/year converted to modern format). Organ compass is given using the English system (see Johnstone (2003), p. 508).

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About the team

Alessandra Tosi was the managing editor for this book.

Proof-reading by Adèle Kreager. Indexing by the author.

Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal designed the cover. The cover was produced in InDesign using the Fontin font.

Jeremy Bowman typeset the book in InDesign and produced the paperback, hardback, PDF and EPUB editions. The main text font is Tex Gyre Pagella and the heading font is Californian FB.

The conversion to HTML was performed with open-source software and other tools freely available on our GitHub page at <https://github.com/OpenBookPublishers>.

Raegan Allen was in charge of marketing.

This book was peer-reviewed by Prof Joseph Sargent, The University of Alabama, and two anonymous referees. Experts in their field, our readers give their time freely to help ensure the academic rigour of our books. We are grateful for their generous and invaluable contributions.

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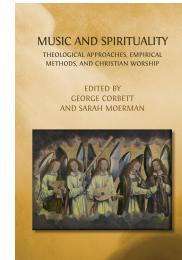
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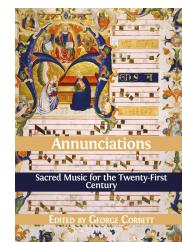


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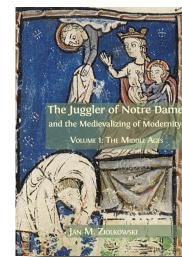


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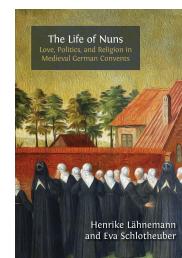


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RICHARD NEWSHOLME

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